

Edward Craven Hawtrey



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THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND,

FROM

The INVASION of JULIUS CÆSAR

TO

The REVOLUTION in 1688.

IN EIGHT VOLUMES.

By DAVID HUME, Esq;

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CHAP. XVII.

1377. Government during the minority.

THE parliament, which was ſummoned ſoon after the King's acceſſion, was both elected and aſſembled in tranquillity; and the great change, from a ſovereign of conſummate wiſdom and experience, to a boy of eleven years of age, was not immediately felt by the people. The habits of order and obedience, which the barons had been taught during the long reign of Edward, ſtill influenced them; and

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1377. the authority of the King's three uncles, the dukes of Lancaſter, York, and Gloceſter, ſufficed to repreſs, for a time, the turbulent ſpirit, to which that order, in a weak reign, was ſo often ſubject. The dangerous ambition too of theſe princes themſelves was checked, by the plain and undeniable title of Richard, by the declaration of it made by his grandfather in parliament, and by the affectionate regard, which the people bore to the memory of his father, and which was naturally transferred to the young prince upon the throne. The different characters of theſe three dukes, rendered them alſo a counterpoize to each other; and it was natural to expect, that any dangerous deſigns, which might be formed by one brother, would meet with oppoſition from the others. Lancaſter, whoſe age and experience and authority under the late King, gave him the aſcendant among them; tho' his integrity ſeemed not proof againſt great temptations, was neither of an enterprizing ſpirit, nor of a popular and engaging temper. York was indolent, unactive, and of a ſlender capacity. Gloceſter was turbulent, bold, and popular; but being the youngeſt of the family, was reſtrained by the power and authority of his elder brothers. There appeared, therefore, no circumſtance in the domeſtic ſituation of England, which might endanger the public peace, or give any immediate apprehenſions to the lovers of their country.

BUT as Edward, tho' he had fixed the ſucceſſion to the crown, had taken no care to eſtabliſh a plan of government during the minority of his grandſon; it behoved the parliament to ſupply this defect: And the houſe of commons diſtinguiſhed themſelves, by taking the lead on that occaſion. This houſe, which had been riſing to conſideration during the whole courſe of the late reign, naturally received an acceſſion of power during the minority; and as it was now becoming a ſcene

of

of buſineſs, the commons choſe for the firſt time a ſpeaker, who might preſerve order in their debates, and maintain thoſe forms, which are requiſite in all numerous aſſemblies. Peter de la Mare was the man pitched on; the ſame perſon who had been impriſoned and detained in cuſtody by the late King for his freedom of ſpeech in attacking the miſtreſs and the miniſters of that prince. But tho' this election diſcovered a ſpirit of liberty in the commons, and was followed by farther attacks both on theſe miniſters, and on Alice Pierce[a], they were ſtill too much ſenſible of their great inferiority, to aſſume at firſt any immediate ſhare in the adminiſtration of government, or the care of the King's perſon. They were contented to apply by petition to the lords for that purpoſe, and deſire them both to appoint a council of nine, who might direct the public buſineſs, and to chooſe men of a virtuous life and converſation, who might inſpect the conduct and education of the young prince. The lords complied with the firſt part of this requeſt, and elected the biſhops of London, Carliſle, and Saliſbury, the earls of Marche and Stafford, ſir Richard de Stafford, ſir Henry le Scrope, ſir John Devereux, and ſir Hugh Segrave, to whom they gave authority for a year to conduct the ordinary courſe of buſineſs[b]. But as to the regulation of the King's houſehold, they declined interpoſing in an office, which, they ſaid, was both ſo invidious in itſelf, and might prove ſo diſagreeable to his majeſty.

CHAP. XVII. 1377.

THE commons, as they acquired more courage, ventured to proceed a ſtep farther in their applications. They preſented a petition, in which they prayed the King to check the prevailing cuſtom among the barons of forming illegal confederacies together, and ſupporting each other, as well as men of inferior rank, in the

[a] Walſing. p. 150. [b] Rymer, vol. vii. p. 161.

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[a] Walſing. p. 150. [b] Rymer, vol. vii. p. 161.

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violations of law and juſtice. They received from the throne a general and an obliging anſwer to this petition: But another part of their application, that all the great officers ſhould, during the King's minority, be appointed by parliament, which ſeemed to require the concurrence of the commons, as well as that of the upper houſe, in the nomination, was not complied with: The lords alone aſſumed the power of appointing theſe officers: The commons tacitly acquieſced in their choice; and thought, that, for the preſent, they had proceeded a ſufficient length, if they but advanced their pretenſions, tho' rejected, of interpoſing in theſe more important matters of ſtate.

On this footing then the government ſtood. The adminiſtration was conducted entirely in the King's name: No regency was expreſsly appointed: The council and the great officers, named by the peers, did their duty, each in his ſeparate department: And the whole ſyſtem was for ſome years kept together, by the ſecret authority of the King's uncles, eſpecially of the duke of Lancaſter, who was in reality the regent.

The parliament was diſſolved, after the commons had repreſented the neceſſity of their being re-aſſembled once every year, as appointed by law; and after having elected two citizens as their treaſurers, to receive and diſburſe the produce of two fifteens and tenths, which they voted to the crown. In the other parliaments called during the minority, the commons ſtill diſcover a ſtrong ſpirit of freedom and ſenſe of their own authority, which, without breeding any diſturbance, tended to ſecure their independance and that of the people [c].

EDWARD

[c] In the fifth year of the King, *the commons complained of the government about the King's perſon, his court, the exceſſive number of his ſervants, of the abuſes in the Chancery, King's Bench, Common Pleas, Exchequer, and of grievous oppreſſions in the country, by the great multitudes of maintainers of quar-*

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1377.

EDWARD had left his grandſon involved in many dangerous wars. The pretenſions of the duke of Lancaſter to the crown of Caſtile, made that kingdom ſtill perſevere in hoſtilities againſt England. Scotland, whoſe throne was now filled by Robert Steuart, nephew to David Bruce, and the firſt prince of that family, maintained ſuch cloſe connexions with France, that war with the one crown almoſt neceſſarily produced hoſtilities with the other. The French monarch, whoſe prudent conduct had acquired him the ſirname of *wiſe*, as he had already baffled all the experience and valour of the two Edwards, was likely to prove a dangerous enemy to a minor King; but his genius, which was not naturally enterprizing, led him not, at preſent, to give any great diſturbance to his neighbours; and he laboured, beſides, under many difficulties at home, which it was neceſſary for him to ſurmount, before he could think of making conqueſts in an enemy's country. England was maſter of Calais, Bourdeaux, and Bayonne; had lately acquired poſſeſſion of Cherbourg, from the ceſſion of the King of Navarre, and of Breſt from that of the duke

quarrels, (men linked in confederacies together) *who behaved themſelves like kings in the country, ſo as there was very little law or right, and of other things which they ſaid were the cauſe of the late commotions under Wat Tyler.* Parl. Hiſt. vol. i. p 365. This irregular government, which no king and no houſe of commons had been able to remedy, was the ſource of the licentiouſneſs of the great, and turbulency of the people, as well as tyranny of the princes. If ſubjects would enjoy liberty, and Kings ſecurity, the laws muſt be executed.

In the ninth of this reign, the commons alſo diſcovered an accuracy and a jealouſy of liberty, which we ſhould little expect in theſe rude times. "It was agreed by parliament," ſays Cotton p . , "that the ſubſidy "of wools, wool fells, and ſkins, granted t King until the time "of Mid-ſummer then enſuing, ſhould ceaſe on he ſame time unto "the feaſt of St. Peter *ad vincula*; for that tl -by the King ſhould be "interrupted for claiming ſuch grant as due." ee alſo Cotton, p. 198.

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of Brittany [d]; and having thus acceſs into France from every quarter, was able, even in its preſent ſituation, to

1377. give annoyance to his government. Before Charles could remove them from theſe important poſts, he died in the flower of his age, and left his kingdom to a minor ſon, who bore the name of Charles VI.

1378. MEANWHILE the war with France was carried on in a manner ſomewhat languid, and produced no enterprize of great luſtre or renown. Sir Hugh Calverley, who had formerly headed a company of banditti in France, (for he, as well as Sir Robert Knolles, and many of the moſt renowned commanders of Edward, had once followed that

1380. diſhonourable profeſſion) was governor of Calais; and making an inroad into Picardy, with a detachment of the garriſon, he ſet fire to Boulogne [e]. The duke of Lancaſter conducted an army into Brittany, but returned without being able to perform any memorable action. In a ſubſequent year, the duke of Gloceſter marched out of Calais with a body of 2000 cavalry, and 8000 infantry; and ſcrupled not, with this ſmall army, to enter into the heart of France, and to continue his ravages, thro' Picardy, Champaigne, the Brie, the Beauſſe, the Gatinois, the Orleanois, till he reached his allies in the province of Brittany [f]. The duke of Burgundy, at the head of a more conſiderable army, came within ſight of him; but the French were ſo over-awed by the former ſucceſſes of the Engliſh, that no ſuperiority of numbers could tempt them to venture a pitched battle with the troops of that nation. As the duke of Brittany, ſoon after the arrival of theſe ſuccours, formed an accommodation with the court of France; this enterprize alſo

[d] Rymer, vol. vii. p. 190. [e] Walſing. p. 209.
[f] Froiſſart, liv. 2. chap. 50, 51. Walſing. p. 239.

proved

proved in the iſſue unſucceſsful, and made no durable impreſſion upon the enemy. CHAP. XVII.

THE expences of theſe armaments, and the uſual want of oeconomy attending a minority, much exhauſted the Engliſh treaſury, and obliged the parliament, in order to ſupply it, to impoſe a new and extraordinary tax of three groats on every perſon, male and female, above fifteen years of age; and they ordained that, in levying that tax, the opulent ſhould relieve the poor by an equitable compenſation. This impoſition excited a mutiny, which was very ſingular in its circumſtances. All hiſtory abounds with examples, where the great tyrannize over the meaner ſort: But here the loweſt populace roſe againſt their rulers, exerciſed the moſt cruel ravages upon them, and took vengeance for all their former oppreſſions. 1380.

THE faint dawning of the arts and of good government in that age, had excited the minds of the populace, in different ſtates of Europe, to wiſh for a better condition, and to murmur againſt thoſe chains, which the laws, enacted by the haughty nobility and gentry, had ſo long impoſed upon them. The commotions of the people in Flanders, the mutiny of the peaſants in France, were the natural effects of this growing ſpirit of independance; and the report of theſe events, being brought into England, where perſonal ſlavery was more general than in any other country of Europe [g], had prepared the minds of the multitude for an inſurrection. One John Ball alſo, a ſeditious preacher, who affected low popularity, went about the country, and inculcated on his audience the principles of the firſt origin of mankind from one common ſtock, their equal right to liberty and to all the goods of nature, the tyranny of artificial 1381.

[g] Froiſſart, liv. 2. chap. 74.

CHAP. XVII. 1381.

diſtinctions, and the abuſes which had ariſen from the degradation of the more conſiderable part of the ſpecies, and the aggrandizement of a few inſolent rulers [h]. Theſe doctrines, ſo agreeable to the populace and ſo conformable to the ideas of primitive equality, which are engraven in the hearts of all men, were greedily received by the multitude; and had ſcattered the ſparks of that ſedition, which the preſent tax raiſed into a conflagration.

Inſurrections of the common people.

THE impoſition of three groats a head had been farmed out to tax-gathers in each county, who levied the money with rigour on the people; and the clauſe, of making the rich eaſe their poorer neighbours of ſome ſhare of the burden, being ſo vague and undetermined, had doubtleſs occaſioned many partialities, and made the people more ſenſible of the unequal lot, which fortune had aſſigned them in the diſtribution of her favours. The firſt diſorder aroſe from a black-ſmith in a village of Eſſex. The tax-gatherers came to this man's ſhop, while he was at work, and demanded payment for his daughter, whom he aſſerted to be below the age aſſigned by the ſtatute. One of theſe fellows offered to produce a very indecent proof to the contrary, and at the ſame time laid hold of the maid: Which the father reſenting, immediately knocked out the ruffian's brains with his hammer. The byſtanders applauded the action, and exclaimed, that it was full time for the people to take vengeance of their tyrants, and to vindicate their native liberty. They immediately flew to arms: The whole neighbourhood joined in the ſedition: The flame ſpread in an inſtant over the county: It ſoon propagated itſelf into that of Kent, of Hertford, Surrey, Suſſex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridge, and Lincoln. Before the government had the leaſt warning of the danger, the diſorder had riſen

[h] Froiſſart, liv. 2. chap. 74. Walſingham, p. 275.

beyond controul or oppoſition: The populace had ſhaken off all regard to their former maſters: And being headed by the moſt audacious and criminal of their aſſociates, who aſſumed the feigned names of Wat Tyler, Jack Straw, Hob Carter, and Tom Miller, by which they were fond of denoting their mean origin, they committed every where the moſt outrageous violences on ſuch of the gentry or nobility as had the misfortune to fall into their hands. CHAP. XVII. 1381.

THE inſurgents, amounting to an hundred thouſand men, aſſembled on Black-heath, under their leaders, Tyler and Straw; and as the princeſs of Wales, the King's mother, returning from a pilgrimage to Canterbury, paſſed thro' the midſt of them, they attacked her company, and ſome of the moſt inſolent among them, to ſhow their purpoſe of levelling all mankind, forced kiſſes from her; but they allowed her to continue her journey, without attempting any farther injury [i]. They ſent a meſſage to the King, who had taken ſhelter in the Tower; and deſired a conference with him. Richard ſailed down the river in a barge; but on his approaching the ſhore, he ſaw ſuch ſymptoms of tumult and inſolence, that he put back and returned to that fortreſs [k]. The mutinous peaſants, meanwhile, favoured by the city rabble, had broke into London; had burnt the duke of Lancaſter's palace of the Savoy; cut off the heads of all the gentlemen whom they laid hold of; expreſſed a particular animoſity againſt the lawyers and attornies; and pillaged the warehouſes of the rich merchants [l]. A great body of them quartered themſelves at Mile-end; and the King, finding no defence in the Tower, which was weakly garriſoned, and ill ſupplied with proviſions, was obliged to go out to them, and aſk 12th June.

[i] Froiſſart, liv. 2. chap. 74.
[k] Ibid. chap. 75.
[l] Ibid. chap. 76. Walſingham, p. 248, 249.

their

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their demands. They required a general pardon, the abolition of ſlavery, freedom of commerce in market-towns without tolls or impoſts, and a fixed rent on lands inſtead of the ſervices due by villenage. Theſe requeſts, which, tho' extremely reaſonable in themſelves, the nation was not ſufficiently prepared to receive, and which it was dangerous to have extorted by violence, were however complied with; charters to that purpoſe were granted them; and this body immediately diſperſed and returned to their ſeveral homes [m].

DURING this tranſaction, another body of the rebels had broke into the Tower; had murdered Simon Sudbury, the primate, and chancellor, with Sir Robert Hales, the treaſurer, and ſome other perſons of diſtinction; and continued their ravages in the city [n]. The King paſſing along Smithfield, very ſlenderly guarded, met with Wat Tyler, at the head of theſe rioters, and entered into a conference with him. Tyler, having ordered his companions to retire till he ſhould give them a ſignal, after which they were to murder all the company except the King himſelf, whom they were to detain priſoner, feared not to come into the midſt of the royal retinue. He there behaved himſelf in ſuch a manner, that Walworth, the mayor of London, not able to bear his inſolence, drew his ſword, and ſtruck him ſo violent a blow as brought him to the ground, where he was inſtantly diſpatched by others of the King's train. The mutineers ſeeing their leader fall, prepared themſelves for revenge; and this whole company, with the King himſelf, had undoubtedly periſhed on the ſpot, had it not been for an extraordinary preſence of mind which Richard diſcovered on this occaſion. He ordered his company to ſtop; he advanced alone towards the enraged multitude; and

[m] Froiſſart, liv. 2. chap. 77.

[n] Walſingham, p. 250, 251.

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accoſting them with an affable and intrepid countenance, he aſked them, "What is the meaning of this diſorder, "my good people? Are you angry that you have loſt "your leader? I am your King: I will be your leader." The populace, overawed by his preſence, implicitly followed him: He led them out into the fields, to prevent any diſorder which might have ariſen by their continuing in the city: Being there joined by Sir Robert Knolles and a body of well armed veteran ſoldiers, who had been ſecretly drawn together, he ſtrictly prohibited that officer from falling on the rioters, and committing an undiſtinguiſhed ſlaughter upon them; and he peaceably diſmiſſed them with the ſame charters, which had been granted to their companions [o]. Soon after, the nobility and gentry, hearing of the King's danger, in which they were all involved, flocked to London with their adherents and retainers; and Richard took the field at the head of an army 40,000 ſtrong [p]. It then behoved all the other rebels to ſubmit: The charters of enfranchiſement and pardon were revoked by parliament; the low people were reduced to the ſame ſlaviſh condition as before, and ſeveral of the ringleaders were ſeverely puniſhed for the late diſorders. It was pretended, that the intentions of the inſurgents had been to ſeize the King's perſon, to carry him thro' England at their head, to murder all the nobility, gentry and lawyers, and even all the biſhops and prieſts, except the mendicant friars; to diſpatch afterwards the King himſelf; and having thus reduced all the people to a level, to order the kingdom at their pleaſure [q]. It is not impoſſible, that many of them, in the delirium of their firſt ſucceſs, might have formed ſuch projects: But of all the evils attending human ſociety, the inſurrections of the populace, when not raiſed and ſupported

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[o] Froiſſart, vol. ii. chap. 77. Walſingham, p. 252. Knyghton, p. 2637. [p] Walſingham, p. 267. [q] Ibid. p. 265.

CHAP. XVII. 1381. by perſons of higher quality, is the leaſt to be dreaded: The miſchiefs, conſequent on an abolition of all rank and diſtinction, become ſo great, that they are immediately felt, and ſoon bring back affairs to their former order and arrangement.

A YOUTH of ſixteen, (which was at this time the King's age) that had diſcovered ſo much courage, preſence of mind, and addreſs, and had ſo dextrouſly eluded the violence of this tumult, gave great hopes to the nation; and it was natural to expect, that he would, in the courſe of his life, equal the glories, which had ſo uniformly attended his father and his grandfather, in all their 1385. undertakings. But in proportion as Richard advanced in years, theſe hopes were blaſted; and his want of capacity, at leaſt of ſolid judgment, appeared in every enterprize, which he attempted. The Scots, ſenſible of their own deficiency in cavalry, had applied to the regency of Charles VI. and John de Vienne, admiral of France, had been ſent over with a body of 1500 men at arms, to ſupport them in their incurſions againſt the Engliſh. The danger was now deemed by the King's uncles ſomewhat ſerious; and a great army of 60,000 men was levied and conducted againſt Scotland, with Richard himſelf at the head of it. The Scots pretended not to make reſiſtance to ſo great a force: They abandoned without ſcruple their country to be pillaged and deſtroyed by the enemy: And when de Vienne expreſſed his ſurprize at this plan of operations, they told him, that all their cattle was driven into the foreſts and faſtneſſes; that their houſes and other goods were of no value; and that they well knew how to compenſate themſelves for any loſſes, which they might ſuſtain in that reſpect, by making an invaſion on the Engliſh. Accordingly, when Richard entered Scotland by Berwic and the eaſt coaſt, the Scots and French, to the number of 30,000 men, paſſed the borders of England by the weſt,

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weſt, and carrying on their ravages thro' Cumberland, Weſtmoreland, and Lancaſhire, collected a rich booty, and then returned in tranquillity to their own country. Richard meanwhile advanced towards Edinburgh, and deſtroyed in his way all the towns and villages on each ſide of him: He reduced that city to aſhes: He treated in the ſame manner Perth, Dundee, and other places in the low countries; but when he was adviſed to march towards the weſt coaſt, to await there the return of the enemy, and to take revenge on them for their devaſtations, his impatience to be in England, and enjoy his uſual pleaſures and amuſements, was more prevalent; and he carried back his army, without effecting any thing by all theſe mighty preparations. The Scots, ſoon after, finding the ſolid bodies of French cavalry very uſeleſs in that deſultory kind of war, to which they confined themſelves, treated their allies ſo ill, that the French returned home; very much diſguſted with the country, and the manners of its inhabitants [r]. The Engliſh, tho' they regretted the indolence and diſſolute manners of their King, ſaw themſelves for the future ſecured againſt any dangerous invaſion from that quarter. 1385.

BUT it was ſo material an intereſt of the French court to wreſt the ſea-port towns from the hands of their enemy, that they reſolved to attempt it by ſome other expedient, and found no means ſo likely as by an invaſion of England itſelf. They collected an immenſe fleet and army at Sluiſe; for the Flemings were now in alliance with them: All the nobility of France were engaged in this enterprize: The Engliſh were kept in alarm: Great preparations were made for the reception of the invaders: 1386.

[r] Froiſſart, liv. 2. chap. 149, 150, &c. liv. 3. chap. 52. Walſingham, p. 316, 317.

And

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And tho' the diſperſion of the French ſhips by a ſtorm, and the taking of many of them by the Engliſh, before the embarkation of the troops, freed the kingdom from the preſent danger, they were fully ſenſible, that this perilous ſituation might every moment return upon them [s].

THERE were two circumſtances chiefly, which engaged the French at this time to think of ſuch attempts. The one was the abſence of the duke of Lancaſter, who had carried into Spain all the flower of the Engliſh military force, in proſecution of his vain claim to the crown of Caſtile; an enterprize, in which, after ſome promiſing ſucceſs, he was finally diſappointed: The other was, the violent diſſenſions and diſorders, which had taken place in the Engliſh government.

THE ſubjection, in which Richard was held by his uncles, particularly by the duke of Gloceſter, a prince of enterprize and genius, tho' it was not unſuitable to his years and ſlender capacity, was extremely diſagreeable to his violent temper; and he began to rebel againſt the yoke impoſed upon him. Robert de Vere, earl of Oxford, a young man of a noble family, of an agreeable figure, but of diſſolute manners, had acquired an entire aſcendant over him; and ruled him with the moſt abſolute authority. The King knew ſo little bounds to his affection, that he firſt created his favourite marquis of Dublin, a title before unknown in England, and then duke of Ireland; and transferred to him by patent, which was confirmed in parliament, the entire ſovereignty for life of that iſland [t]. He gave him in marriage his couſin german, the daughter of Ingelram de Couci, earl of Bedford; but ſoon after permitted him to repudiate that lady, tho' of

[s] Froiſſart, liv. 3. chap. 41. 53. Walſingham, p. 322, 323.

[t] Cotton, p. 310, 311. Cox's Hiſt. of Ireland, p. 129. Walſingham, p. 324.

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an unexceptionable character, and to marry a foreigner, a Bohemian, with whom he had become enamoured [u]. These public declarations of attachment turned the whole court towards the favourite: All graces passed thro' his hands: Access to the King could only be obtained thro' his mediation: And Richard seemed to take no pleasure in royal authority, but so far as it enabled him to load with favours and titles and dignities this object of his affections. CHAP. XVII. 1386.

THE jealousy of power immediately produced an animosity between the minion and his creatures on the one hand, and the princes of the blood and chief nobility on the other; and the usual complaints against the insolence of favourites were loudly echoed and greedily received, in every part of the kingdom. Mowbray, earl of Nottingham, the mareschal, Fitz-Alan earl of Arundel, Piercy earl of Northumberland, Montacute earl of Salisbury, Beauchamp earl of Warwic, were all connected with each other, and with the princes, by friendship or alliances, and still more by their antipathy to those who had eclipsed them in the King's favour and confidence. No longer kept in awe by the personal character of the prince, they scorned to submit to his ministers; and the methods, which they took to redress the grievance complained of, well suited the violence of that age, and the desperate extremities, to which every opposition was sure to be instantly carried. Discontent of the barons.

MICHAEL DE LA POLE, the present chancellor, and lately created earl of Suffolk, was the son of an eminent merchant; but had risen by his abilities and valour during the wars of Edward III. had acquired the friendship of that monarch, and was esteemed the person of greatest experience and capacity among those who were attached to the duke of Ireland and the King's secret council.

[u] Walsingham, p. 328.

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The duke of Gloceſter, who had the houſe of commons at his devotion, impelled them to exerciſe that power which they ſeem firſt to have aſſumed againſt lord Latimer during the declining years of the late King; and an impeachment againſt the chancellor was carried up by them to the houſe of peers, which was no leſs at his devotion. The King foreſaw the tempeſt preparing againſt him and his miniſters. After attempting in vain to rouſe the Londoners to his defence, he withdrew from parliament, and retired with his court to Eltham. The parliament ſent a deputation, inviting him to return, and threatening, that, if he continued to abſent himſelf, they would immediately diſſolve, and leave the nation, tho' at that time in imminent danger of a French invaſion, without any ſupport or ſupply for its defence. At the ſame time, a member was encouraged to call for the record, containing the parliamentary depoſition of Edward II.; a plain intimation of the fate, which Richard, if he continued refractory, had reaſon to expect from them. The King, finding himſelf unable to reſiſt, was contented to ſtipulate, that, except finiſhing the preſent impeachment againſt Suffolk, no attack ſhould be made againſt any other of his miniſters; and on that condition, he returned to the parliament [a].

NOTHING

[a] Knyghton, p. 2715, &c. The ſame author, p. 2680, tells us, that the King, in return to the meſſage, ſaid, that he would not for their deſire remove the meaneſt ſcullion from his kitchen. This author alſo tells us, that the King ſaid to the commiſſioners, when they harangued him, that he ſaw his ſubjects were rebellious, and his beſt way would be to call in the King of France to his aid. But it is plain, that all theſe ſpeeches were either intended by Knyghton merely as an ornament to his hiſtory, or are falſe. For (1) when the five lords accuſe the King's miniſters in the next parliament, and impute to them every raſh action of the King, they ſpeak nothing of theſe replies which are ſo obnoxious, were ſo recent, and are pretended to have been ſo public. (2) The King, ſo far from having any connexions at that time with France,

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NOTHING can prove more fully the innocence of Suffolk, than the frivolousness of the articles, which his enemies, in the present plenitude of their power, thought proper to object against him [a]. It was alleged, that being chancellor, and obliged by his oath to consult the King's profit, he had purchased lands of the crown below their true value; that he had exchanged with the king a perpetual annuity of 400 marks a year, which he enjoyed from his father, and which was assigned upon the customs of the port of Hull, for lands of an equal income; that having obtained for his son the priory of St. Anthony, which was formerly possessed by a Frenchman, an enemy and a schismatic, and a new prior being at the same time named by the Pope, he had refused to admit this person, till he made a composition with his son, and agreed to pay him an hundred pounds a year from the benefice; that he had purchased, from one Tydeman of Limborch, an old and forfeited annuity of fifty pounds a year upon the crown, and had engaged the King to admit that bad debt upon his revenues; and that, when created earl of Suffolk, he had obtained a grant of 500 pounds a year, to support the dignity of that title [b]. Even the proof of these articles, frivolous as they are, was found very defective upon the trial: It appeared, that Suffolk had

France, was threatened with a dangerous invasion from that kingdom. This story seems to have been taken from the reproaches afterwards thrown out against him, and to have been transferred by the historian to this time, to which they cannot be applied.

[a] Cotton, p. 315. Knyghton, p. 2683.

[b] It is probable that the earl of Suffolk was not rich, nor able to support the dignity without the bounty of the crown: For his father Michael de la Pole, though a great merchant, had been ruined by lending money to the late king. See Cotton, p. 194. We may remark that the dukes of Gloucester and York, tho' vastly rich, received at the same time each of them a thousand pounds a year, to support their dignity. Rymer, vol. vii. p. 481. Cotton, p. 310.

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1386. made no purchaſes of the crown while he was chancellor, and that all his bargains of that kind were made before he was advanced to that dignity [c]. It is almoſt needleſs to add, that he was condemned, notwithſtanding his defence; and that he was deprived of his office.

GLOCESTER and his aſſociates obſerved their ſtipulation with the King, and attacked no more of his miniſters: But they immediately attacked himſelf and his royal dignity, and framed a commiſſion after the model of thoſe, which had been attempted almoſt in every reign ſince that of Richard I. and which had always been attended with the moſt extreme confuſion [d]. By this commiſſion a council of fourteen perſons were appointed, all of Gloceſter's faction, except Nevil, archbiſhop of York: The ſovereign power was transferred to theſe men for a twelvemonth: The King, who had now reached the twenty-firſt year of his age, was in reality dethroned: The ariſtocracy was rendered ſupreme: And tho' the term of the commiſſion was limited to a twelvemonth, it was eaſy to foreſee, that the intentions of the party were to render it perpetual, and that power would with great difficulty be wreſted from thoſe graſping hands, to which it was once committed. Richard, however, was obliged to ſubmit: He ſigned the commiſſion; he took an oath never to infringe it; and tho' at the end of the ſeſſion, he *publickly* entered a proteſt, that the prerogatives of his crown, notwithſtanding his late conceſſion, ſhould ſtill be deemed entire and unimpaired [e], the new commiſſioners, without regarding it, proceeded to the exerciſe of their authority.

1387. Civil commotions.

THE King, thus diſpoſſeſt of royal power, was ſoon ſenſible of the contempt into which he was fallen.

[c] Cotton, p. 315. [d] Knyghton, p. 2686. Statutes at large, 10 Rich. II. chap. i. [e] Cotton, p. 318.

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His favourites and miniſters, who were as yet allowed to remain about his perſon, failed not to aggravate the injury, which, without any demerit on his part, had been offered to him. And his eager temper was of itſelf ſufficiently inclined to ſeek the means both of recovering his authority and of revenging himſelf on thoſe who had invaded it. As the houſe of commons appeared now of ſome weight in the conſtitution, he tried ſecretly ſome expedients for procuring a favourable election: He ſounded ſome of the ſheriffs, who being at that time both the returning officers, and magiſtrates of great power in the counties, would naturally have conſiderable influence in elections: But as moſt of them had been appointed by his uncles, either during his minority, or during the courſe of the preſent commiſſion, he found them in general averſe to his enterprize. The ſentiments and inclinations of the judges were more favourable to him. He met at Nottingham ſir Robert Treſilian, chief juſtice of the King's Bench, ſir Robert Belknappe, chief juſtice of the Common Pleas, ſir John Cary, chief baron of the Exchequer, Holt, Fulthorpe, and Bourg, inferior juſtices, and Lokton, ſerjeant at law; and he propoſed to them ſome queries, which theſe lawyers, either from the influence of his authority or of reaſon, made no ſcruple of anſwering in the way he deſired. They declared, that the late commiſſion was derogatory to the royalty and prerogative of the King; that thoſe who procured it, or adviſed the King to conſent to it, were puniſhable with death; that thoſe who neceſſitated and compelled him were guilty of treaſon; that thoſe were equally criminal who ſhould perſevere in maintaining it; that the King has the right of diſſolving parliaments when he pleaſes; that the parliament, while it ſits, muſt proceed firſt upon the King's buſineſs; and that that aſſembly cannot without the King's conſent impeach any of his miniſters and

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judges [f]. Even according to our preſent ſtrict maxims with regard to law and the royal prerogative, all theſe determinations, except the two laſt, were entirely juſtifiable: And as the great privileges of the commons, particularly that of impeachment, were hitherto very new, and ſupported by few precedents, there want not reaſons of apology for theſe opinions of the judges. They ſigned therefore their anſwer to the King's queries before the archbiſhops of York and Dublin, the biſhops of Durham, Chicheſter, and Bangor, the Duke of Ireland, the earl of Suffolk, and two other counſellors of inferior quality.

THE duke of Gloceſter, and his adherents, ſoon got intelligence of this ſecret conſultation; and were naturally much alarmed at it. They ſaw the King's intention, not only of recovering his authority, but of puniſhing them for invading it; and they determined to prevent the execution of his purpoſe. As ſoon as he came to London, which, they knew, was well diſpoſed to their party, they ſecretly aſſembled their forces, and appeared in arms at Haringay-park, near Highgate, with a power, which Richard and his miniſters were not able to reſiſt. They ſent him a meſſage by the archbiſhop of Canterbury, and the lords Lovel, Cobham, and Devereux, and demanded, that the perſons who had ſeduced him by their pernicious counſel, and were traitors both to him and to the kingdom, ſhould be delivered to them. A few days after, they appeared in his preſence, armed and attended with armed followers; and they accuſed by name the archbiſhop of York, the duke of Ireland, the earl of Suffolk, Sir Robert Treſilian, and Sir Nicholas Brembre, as public and dangerous enemies to the ſtate. They threw down their gauntlets before the king, and fiercely offered to main-

[f] Knyghton, p. 2694. Ypod Neuſt. p. 541.

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tain the truth of their charge by duel. The perſons accuſed, and all the other obnoxious miniſters, had withdrawn or concealed themſelves. CHAP. XVII. 1387.

THE duke of Ireland fled to Cheſhire, and levied ſome forces, with which he advanced to relieve the King from the violence of the nobles. Gloceſter encountered him in Oxfordſhire with much ſuperior forces; routed him, diſperſed his followers, and obliged him to fly into the Low-Countries, where he died in exile a few years after. The lords then appeared at London with an army of 40,000 men; and having obliged the King to ſummon a parliament, which was entirely at their devotion, they had full power, by obſerving a few legal forms, to take vengeance on all their enemies. Five great peers, men whoſe combined power was able at any time to ſhake the throne, Thomas duke of Gloceſter, the King's uncle; Henry earl of Derby, ſon of the duke of Lancaſter; Richard earl of Arundel and Surrey; Thomas earl of Warwic, and Thomas earl of Nottingham, and mareſchal of England, entered before the parliament an accuſation or appeal, as it was called, againſt the five counſellors, whom they had already accuſed before the King. The parliament, who ought to have been judges, were not aſhamed to impoſe an oath on all their members, by which they bound themſelves to live and die with the lords appellants, and to defend them againſt all their enemies with their lives and fortunes [z]. 1388. 3d February. Expulſion or execution of the King's miniſters.

THE other proceedings were well ſuited to the violence and iniquity of the times. A charge, conſiſting of thirty-nine articles, was delivered in by the appellants; and as none of the accuſed counſellors, except Sir Nicholas Brembre, was in cuſtody, the reſt were cited to anſwer; and upon their non-appearance, after a very ſhort interval,

[z] Cotton, p. 328.

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without hearing a witneſs, without examining a fact, or deliberating on one point of law, the houſe of peers declared them guilty of high treaſon. Sir Nicholas Brembre, who was produced in court, had the appearance, and probably no more than the appearance, of a trial: The peers, tho' they were not by law his proper judges, pronounced, in a very ſummary manner, ſentence of death upon him; and he was executed, together with Sir Robert Treſilian, who had been diſcovered and taken in the interval.

It would be tedious to recite the whole charge delivered in againſt the five counſellors; which is to be met with in ſeveral collections [h]. It is ſufficient to obſerve in general, that if we reaſon upon the ſuppoſition, which is the true one, that the royal prerogative was invaded by the commiſſion given to the duke of Gloceſter and his aſſociates, and that the King's perſon was afterwards detained in cuſtody by rebels, many of the articles will appear, not only to imply no crime in the duke of Ireland and the miniſters, but to impute to them actions, which were laudable, and which they were bound by their allegiance to perform. The few articles reſpecting the conduct of theſe miniſters before that commiſſion, which ſubverted the conſtitution, and annihilated all juſtice and legal authority, are vague and general; ſuch as their engroſſing the King's favour, keeping the grandees at a diſtance from him, obtaining unreaſonable grants for themſelves or their creatures, and diſſipating the public treaſure by uſeleſs expences. No violence is objected to them; no particular illegal act [i]; no

[h] Knyghton, p. 2715. Tyrrel, vol. iii. part 2. p. 919. from the records. Parliamentary Hiſtory, vol. i. p. 414.

[i] We muſt except the 12th article, which accuſes Brembre of having cut off the heads of twenty-two priſoners, confined for felony or debt,

no breach of any ſtatute; and their adminiſtration may therefore be concluded to have been ſo far innocent and inoffenſive. All the diſorders indeed ſeem to have proceeded, not from any infringement of the laws attempted by the miniſters, but merely from a rivalſhip of power, which the duke of Gloceſter, and the great nobility, agreeable to the genius of the times, carried to the utmoſt extremity againſt their opponents, without any regard to reaſon, juſtice, or humanity. CHAP. XVII. 1388.

But theſe were not the only acts of violence committed during the triumph of the party. All the other judges, who had ſigned the extrajudicial opinions at Nottingham, were condemned to death, and were, as a grace or favour, baniſhed to Ireland; tho' they pleaded the fear of their lives, and the menaces of the King's miniſters as their excuſe. The lord Beauchamp of Holt, ſir James Berners, and John Saliſbury, were alſo tried and condemned for high treaſon; merely becauſe they had attempted to defeat the late commiſſion: But the life of the latter was ſpared. The fate of ſir Simon Burley was more ſevere: This gentleman was much beloved for his perſonal merit, had diſtinguiſhed himſelf by many honourable actions [k], was created knight of the garter, and

debt, without warrant or proceſs of law: But as it is not conceivable what intereſt Brembre could have to treat theſe felons and debtors in ſuch a manner; we may preſume that the fact is either falſe or miſrepreſented. It was in theſe mens power to ſay any thing againſt the perſons accuſed: No defence or apology was admitted: All was lawleſs will and pleaſure.

They are alſo accuſed of deſigns to murder the lords; but theſe accuſations either are general, or deſtroy one another. Sometimes, as in article 15th, they intend to murder them by means of the mayor and city of London: Sometimes, as in article 28th, by trial and falſe inqueſts: Sometimes, as in article 28th, by means of the King of France, who was to receive Calais for his pains.

[k] At leaſt, this is the character given of him by Froiſſart, liv. 2.

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and had been appointed governor to Richard, by the choice of the late King and the Black Prince: He had attended his master from the earliest infancy of that prince, and had ever remained extremely attached to him: Yet all these considerations could not save him from falling a victim to Gloucester's vengeance. This execution, more than all the others, made a deep impression on Richard's mind: His Queen too (for he was already married to the sister of the Emperor Wincheslaus, King of Bohemia) interested herself extremely in behalf of Burley: She remained three hours on her knees before the earl of Gloucester, pleading for that gentleman's life; but tho' she was become extremely popular by her amiable qualities, which had acquired her the appellation of *the good Queen Ann*; her petition was sternly rejected by the inexorable tyrant.

THE parliament concluded this violent scene by a declaration, that none of the articles, decided on these trials to be treason, should ever afterwards be drawn into precedent by the judges, who were still to consider the statute of the twenty-fifth of Edward as the rule of their conduct. The house of lords seem not at that time to have known or acknowledged the principle, that they themselves were bound, in their judicial capacity, to follow the rules, which they had established in their legislative [1]. It was also enacted, that every one should swear

who knew him personally: Walsin. p. 334, gives a very different character of him; but he is a writer somewhat passionate and partial; and the choice made of this gentleman by Edward III. and the Black Prince for the education of Richard, makes the character given of him by Froissart, much more probable.

[1] In general, the parliament in those days never paid a proper regard to Edward's statute of treasons, tho' one of the most advantageous laws for the subject that has ever been enacted. In the 17th of the King, *the dukes of Lancaster and Gloucester complain to Richard that Sir Thomas Talbot,*

swear to the perpetual maintenance and support of the forfeitures and attainders, and of all the other acts passed during this parliament. The archbishop of Canterbury added the penalty of excommunication, as a farther security of these deeds of violence. CHAP. XVII. 1388.

It might naturally be expected, that the king, being reduced to such slavery by the combination of the princes of the blood and the chief nobility, and having appeared so unable to defend his servants from the most cruel effects of their resentment, would long remain in subjection to them; and never would recover the royal power, without the most violent struggles and convulsions: But the event proved otherwise. In less than a twelvemonth, Richard, who was in his twenty-third year, declared in council, that as he had now attained the full age, which intitled him to govern by his own authority his kingdom and household, he resolved to exercise his right of sovereignty; and when no one ventured to contradict so reasonable an intention, he deprived Fitz-Alan archbishop 1389.

bot, with others of his adherents, conspired the death of the said dukes in divers parts of Cheshire, as the same was confessed and well known; and praying that the parliament may judge of the fault. Whereupon the King and the lords in the parliament judged the same fact to be open and high treason: And hereupon they award two writs, the one to the sheriff of York, and the other to the sheriffs of Derby, to take the body of the said Sir Thomas returnable in the King's bench in the month of Easter then ensuing. And open proclamation was made in Westminster-hall, that upon the sheriff's return, and at the next coming in of the said Sir Thomas, the said Thomas should be convicted of treason, and incur the loss and pain of the same: And all such as should receive him after the proclamation should incur the same loss and pain. Cotton, p. 354. It is to be observed, that this extraordinary judgment was passed in a time of tranquillity. Tho' the statute itself of Edward III. reserves a power to the parliament to declare any new species of treason, it is not to be supposed that this power was reserved to the house of lords alone, or that men were to be judged by a law *ex post facto*. At least, if such be the meaning of the clause; it may be affirmed, that men were at that time very ignorant of the first principles of law and justice.

of

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of Canterbury of the dignity of chancellor, and beſtowed that high office on William of Wickham, biſhop of Wincheſter; the biſhop of Hereford was diſplaced from the office of treaſurer, the earl of Arundel from that of admiral; even the duke of Gloceſter and the earl of Warwic were removed for a time from the council-board: And no oppoſition was made to theſe great changes. The hiſtory of this reign is very imperfect, and very little to be depended on; except where it is ſupported by the public records: And it is not eaſy for us to aſſign the reaſon of this unexpected event. Perhaps, ſome ſecret animoſities, naturally to be expected in that ſituation, had crept in among the great men, and enabled the King to recover his authority. Perhaps, the violence of their former proceedings had loſt them the affections of the people, who ſoon repent of any cruel extremities, to which they are carried by their leaders. However this may be, Richard exerciſed with moderation the authority which he had reſumed. He ſeemed to be entirely reconciled to his uncles [m] and the other great men, of whom he had ſo much reaſon to complain: He never attempted to recal from baniſhment the duke of Ireland, whom he found ſo obnoxious to them: He confirmed by proclamation the general pardon, which the parliament had paſſed for all offences: And he courted the affections of the people, by voluntarily remitting ſome ſubſidies, which had been granted him; a remarkable, and almoſt a ſingular inſtance of ſuch generoſity.

AFTER this compoſure of domeſtic differences, and reſtoration of the government to its natural ſtate, there paſſes an interval of eight years, which affords not many remarkable events. The duke of Lancaſter returned from Spain; having reſigned to his rival all pretenſions to the crown of Caſtile upon payment of a large ſum

[m] Dugdale, vol. ii. p. 170.

of

of money [a], and having married his daughter, Philippa, to the King of Portugal. The authority of this prince ſerved to counterbalance that of the duke of Gloceſter, and ſecured the power of Richard, who paid great court to his eldeſt uncle, by whom he had never been offended, and whom he found more moderate in his temper than the younger. He made a ceſſion to him for life of the dutchy of Guienne [b], which the inclinations and changeable humour of the Gaſcons had reſtored to the Engliſh government; but as they remonſtrated loudly againſt this deed, it was finally, with the duke's conſent, revoked by Richard [c]. There happened an incident, which produced a diſſention between Lancaſter and his two brothers. After the death of the Spaniſh princeſs, he eſpouſed Catharine Swineford, daughter of a private knight of Hainault, by whoſe alliance, York and Gloceſter thought the dignity of their family much injured: But the King gratified his uncle by paſſing in parliament a charter of legitimation to the children, whom that lady had born him before marriage, and by creating the eldeſt earl of Somerſet [d].

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THE wars, meanwhile, which Richard had inherited with his crown, ſtill continued; tho' interrupted by frequent truces, according to the practice of that age, and conducted with little vigour, by reaſon of the weakneſs of all parties. The French war was ſcarce heard of; the tranquillity of the northern borders was only interrupted by one inroad of the Scots, which proceeded more from a rivalſhip between the two martial families of Piercy and Douglas, than from any national quarrel: A fierce battle or ſkirmiſh was fought at Otterborne [e],

[a] Knyghton, p. 2677. Walſingham, p. 342.
[b] Rymer, vol. vii. p. 659. [c] Ibid. p. 687.
[d] Cotton, p. 365. Walſingham, p. 352.
[e] 15th Auguſt, 1388.

in

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in which young Piercy, ſirnamed *Hotſpur*, from his impetuous valour, was taken priſoner, and Douglas ſlain; and the victory remained undecided [f]. Some inſurrections of the Iriſh obliged the King to make an expedition into that country, which he reduced to obedience; and he recovered, in ſome degree, by this enterprize, his character of courage, which had ſuffered a little by the inactivity of his reign. At laſt, the Engliſh and French courts began to think in earneſt of a laſting peace; but found it ſo difficult to adjuſt their oppoſite pretenſions, that they were contented to eſtabliſh a truce of twenty-five years [g]: Breſt and Cherbourg were reſtored, the former to the duke of Brittany, the latter to the King of Navarre: Both parties were left in poſſeſſion of all the other places which they held at preſent: And to render the amity between the two crowns more durable, Richard, who was now a widower, was affianced to Iſabella, the daughter of Charles [h]. This princeſs was only ſeven years of age; but the King agreed to ſo unequal a match, chiefly that he might fortify himſelf, by this alliance, againſt the enterprizes of his uncles and the incurable turbulency as well as inconſtancy of his barons.

1394. 1396.

THE adminiſtration of the King, tho' it was not, in this interval, ſullied by any unpopular act, except the ſeizure of the charter of London [i], which was ſoon after reſtored, had not tended much to fortify his authority; and his perſonal character brought him into contempt, even while his public government appeared in a good meaſure unexceptionable. Indolent, expenſive, addicted to low pleaſures; he ſpent his whole time in feaſting and jollity, and diſſipated in idle ſhow, or in

[f] Froiſſart, liv. 3. chap. 124, 125, 126. Walſingham, p. 355.
[g] Rymer, vol. vii. p. 820. [h] Ibid. p. 811.
[i] Ibid. p. 727. Walſingham, p. 347.

bounty

bounty to favourites of no reputation, that revenue which the people expected to see him employ in enterprizes directed to public honour and advantage. He forgot his rank by admitting all men to his familiarity; and he was not sensible, that their acquaintance with the qualities of his mind was not able to impress them with the respect which he neglected to preserve from his birth and station. The earls of Kent and Huntington, his half brothers, were his chief confidents and favourites; and tho' he never devoted himself to them with so profuse an affection as that with which he had been attached to the duke of Ireland, it was easy for men to see that every grace passed thro' their hands, and that the King had rendered himself a mere cypher in the government. The small regard, which the public bore to his person, disposed them to murmur against his administration, and to receive with greedy ears every complaint, which the discontented or ambitious grandees suggested to them. CHAP. XVII. 1396.

Cabals of the duke of Glocester. 1397.

Glocester soon perceived all the advantages, which this dissolute conduct gave him; and finding, that both resentment and jealousy on the side of his nephew still prevented him from acquiring any ascendant over that prince, he determined to cultivate his popularity with the nation, and to revenge himself on those who eclipsed him in favour and authority. He seldom appeared at court or in council: He never declared his opinion but in order to disapprove of the measures embraced by the King and his favourites: And he courted the friendship of every man, whom disappointments or private resentment had rendered an enemy to the administration. The long truce with France was very unpopular with the English, who breathed nothing but war against that hostile nation; and Glocester took care to encourage all the vulgar prejudices, which prevailed on this subject. Forgetting

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getting the misfortunes, which attended the Engliſh arms during the latter years of Edward; he made an invidious compariſon between the glories of that reign and the inactivity of the preſent, and he lamented that Richard ſhould have degenerated ſo far from the heroic virtues, by which his father and his grandfather were diſtinguiſhed. The military men were inflamed with a deſire of war, when they heard him talk of the ſignal victories formerly obtained, and of the eaſy prey which might be made of the French riches by the ſuperior valour of the Engliſh: The populace readily embraced the ſame ſentiments: And all men exclaimed, that this prince, whoſe councils were ſo much neglected, was the true ſupport of Engliſh honour, and alone able to raiſe the nation to its former power and ſplendor. His great abilities, his popular manners, his princely extraction, his immenſe riches, his high office of conſtable [k]; all theſe advantages, not a little aſſiſted by his want of court-favour, gave him a mighty authority in the kingdom, and rendered him extremely formidable to Richard and his miniſters.

FROISSART [l], a contemporary author and very impartial, but whoſe credit is ſomewhat impaired by his want of exactneſs in material facts, aſcribes to the duke of Gloceſter more deſperate views, and ſuch as were totally incompatible with the government and domeſtic tranquillity of the nation. According to that hiſtorian, he propoſed to his nephew, Roger Mortimer, earl of Marche, whom Richard had declared his ſucceſſor, to give him immediate poſſeſſion of the throne, by the depoſition of a prince, ſo unworthy of government and authority: And when Mortimer declined this project, he reſolved to make a partition of the kingdom between himſelf, his two brothers, and the earl of Arundel; and to diſpoſſeſs Richard entirely of the crown. The King,

[k] Rymer, vol. vii. p. 152. [l] Liv. 4. chap. 86.

it is ſaid, being informed of theſe deſigns, ſaw, that either his own ruin or that of Gloceſter was inevitable; and he reſolved, by a haſty blow, to prevent the execution of ſuch deſtructive projects. This is certain, that Gloceſter, by his own confeſſion, had often affected to ſpeak contemptuouſly of the King's perſon and government; had deliberated concerning the lawfulneſs of throwing off allegiance to him; and had even born part in a ſecret conference, where his depoſition was propoſed and talked of, and determined [m]: But it is reaſonable to think, that his ſchemes were not ſo far advanced as to make him think of their immediate execution. The danger, probably, was ſtill too diſtant to render a deſperate remedy entirely neceſſary for the ſecurity of the government. CHAP. XVII. 1397.

BUT whatever opinion we may form of Gloceſter's conſpiracies, his averſion to the French truce and alliance was public and avowed; and that court, which had now a great influence over the King, puſhed him to provide for his own ſafety, by taking revenge of the dangerous deſigns of his uncle. The reſentment of his former violences revived; the ſenſe of his refractory and uncompliant behaviour was ſtill recent; and a man, whoſe ambition had once uſurped royal authority, and who had murdered all the faithful ſervants of the King, was thought capable, on a favourable opportunity, of renewing the ſame treaſonable enterprizes. The King's precipitate temper admitted of no deliberation: He ordered

[m] Cotton, p. 378. Tyrrel, vol. iii. part 2. p. 972, from the records. Parliamentary Hiſtory, vol. i. p. 473. That this confeſſion was genuine, and obtained without violence, may be entirely depended on. Judge Rickhill, who brought it over from Calais, was tried on that account, and acquitted in the firſt parliament of Henry IV. when Gloceſter's party was prevalent. His acquittal, notwithſtanding his innocence, may even appear marvellous, conſidering the times. See Cotton, p. 393.

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1397. Gloceſter to be unexpectedly arreſted; to be hurried into a ſhip which was lying in the river; and to be carried over to Calais, where alone, he thought, that, by reaſon of his numerous partizans, he could ſafely be detained in cuſtody [n]. The earls of Arundel and Warwic were ſeized at the ſame time: The malecontents, ſo ſuddenly deprived of their leaders, were aſtoniſhed, and overawed: And the concurrence of the dukes of Lancaſter and York, in thoſe meaſures, with that of the earls of Derby and Rutland, the ſons of theſe princes [o], bereaved them of all poſſibility of reſiſtance.

17th Sept. A PARLIAMENT was immediately ſummoned at Weſtminſter; and the King doubted not to find the peers, and ſtill more the commons, very compliant with his will. This houſe had in a former parliament given him very ſenſible proofs of their obedience [p]; and the preſent ſuppreſſion

[n] Froiſſart, liv. 4. chap. 90. Walſing. p. 354.

[o] Rymer, vol. viii. p. 7.

[p] In the former parliament, the commons had ſhewn themſelves in a diſpoſition to be very complaiſant to the King; yet there happened an incident in their proceedings, which is very curious, and ſhews us the ſtate of the houſe in that period. The members were either country gentlemen, or merchants, who were aſſembled for a few days, and were entirely unacquainted with buſineſs; ſo that it was eaſy to lead them aſtray, and draw them into votes and reſolutions very different from their ſettled purpoſe. A member had propoſed ſome petitions concerning the ſtate of the nation; in which, among other things, the houſe recommended frugality to the King, and for that purpoſe, deſired, that the court ſhould not be ſo much frequented as formerly with *biſhops* and *ladies*. The King was diſpleaſed with this freedom: The commons very humbly craved pardon: He was not ſatisfied unleſs they would name the mover of that petition. It happened to be one Haxey, whom the parliament, in order to make atonement, condemned for this offence to die the death of a traitor. But the King, at the deſire of the archbiſhop of Canterbury, and the prelates, pardoned him. When a parliament in thoſe times, not agitated by any faction, and being at entire freedom, could be guilty of ſuch monſtrous extravagance,

ſuppreſſion of Gloceſter's party made him ſtill more aſſured of a favourable election. As a farther expedient for that purpoſe, he is alſo ſaid to have employed the influence of the ſheriffs; a practice which, as it was then ſomewhat new, gave great umbrage, but which the eſtabliſhed authority of that aſſembly rendered afterwards more familiar to the nation. Accordingly, the parliament paſſed whatever acts the King was pleaſed to dictate to them [q]: They annulled forever the commiſſion which uſurped upon the royal authority, and declared it treaſonable to attempt, in any future period, the revival of any ſimilar commiſſion [r]: They abrogated all the acts, which attainted the King's miniſters, and which that parliament who paſſed them, and the whole nation, had ſworn inviolably to maintain: And they declared the general pardon then granted to be invalid, as extorted by force, and never ratified by the free conſent of the King. Tho' Richard, after he reſumed the government, and lay no longer under conſtraint, had voluntarily, by proclamation, confirmed that general indemnity; this circumſtance ſeemed not, in their eyes, to merit the leaſt conſideration. Even a particular pardon granted ſix years after to the earl of Arundel, was annulled by parliament; on pretence, that it was procured by ſurprize, and that the King was not then acquainted with the degree of guilt incurred by that nobleman.

THE commons then entered an impeachment againſt Fitz-Alan, archbiſhop of Canterbury, and brother to Arundel, and accuſed him of his concurrence in pro-

gance, it is eaſy to judge what might be expected from them in more trying ſituations. See Cotton's Abridg. p. 361, 362.

[q] The nobles brought numerous retainers with them to give them ſecurity, as we are told by Walſingham, p. 354. The King had a few Cheſhire men for his guard.

[r] Statutes at large, 21 Richard II.

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1397. curing the illegal commiſſion, and in attainting the King's miniſters. The primate pleaded guilty; but as he was protected by the eccleſiaſtical privileges, the King was ſatisfied with a ſentence, which baniſhed him the kingdom, and ſequeſtered his temporalities [s]. An appeal or accuſation was preſented againſt the duke of Gloceſter, and the earls of Arundel and Warwic, by the earls of Rutland, Kent, Huntington, Somerſet, Saliſbury, and Nottingham, together with the lords Spencer and Scrope, and they were accuſed of the ſame crimes which had been imputed to the archbiſhop, as well as of their appearance againſt the King in a hoſtile manner at Haringay-park. The earl of Arundel, who was brought to the bar, very wiſely confined all his defence to the pleading both the general and particular pardon of the King; but was over-ruled, condemned and executed [t]. The earl of Warwic, who was alſo convicted of high treaſon, was, on account of his ſubmiſſive behaviour, pardoned as to his life, but doomed to perpetual baniſhment in the Iſle of Man. No new acts of treaſon were imputed to either of theſe noblemen. The only crimes, for which they were condemned, were the old attempts againſt the crown, which ſeemed to be obliterated, both by the diſtance of time, and by repeated pardons [u]. The reaſons of this method of proceeding, it is difficult to conjecture. The recent conſpiracies of Gloceſter ſeem certain from his own confeſſion: But perhaps, the King and miniſtry had not, at that time, in their hands, any ſatisfactory proof of their reality; perhaps, it was difficult to convict Arundel and Warwic, of any concurrence in them; perhaps, an enquiry into theſe conſpiracies would have involved in the guilt ſome of thoſe great noblemen, who now con-

[s] Cotton, p. 368.

[t] Cotton, p. 377. Froiſſart, liv. 4. chap. 90. Walſing. p. 354.

[u] Tyrrel, vol. iii. part 2. p. 968. from the records.

curred

curred with the crown, and whom it was neceſſary to cover from all imputation; or perhaps, the King, according to the genius of that age, was very indifferent about ſaving even the appearances of juſtice and equity, and was only ſolicitous by any means to enſure ſucceſs in theſe proſecutions. This point, like many others in antient hiſtory, we are obliged to leave altogether undetermined.

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A WARRANT was iſſued to the earl Mareſchal, governor of Calais, to bring over the duke of Gloceſter, in order to his trial; but the governor returned for anſwer, that the duke had died ſuddenly of an apoplexy in that fortreſs. Nothing could be more ſuſpicious than the time of that prince's death: It became immediately the general opinion, that he was murdered by orders from his nephew: In the ſubſequent reign undoubted proofs were produced to parliament, that he had been ſuffocated with pillows by his keepers [x]: And it appeared, that the King, apprehenſive leſt the public trial and execution of ſo popular a prince, and ſo near a relation, might prove both dangerous and invidious, had taken this baſe method of gratifying, and as he fancied, concealing his revenge upon him. Both parties, in their ſucceſſive triumphs, ſeem to have had no farther concern than that of retaliating upon their adverſaries; and neither of them were aware, that, in imitating, they indirectly juſtified, as far as it lay in their power, all the illegal violences of the oppoſite party.

Murder of the duke of Gloceſter.

THIS ſeſſion concluded with the creation or advancement of ſeveral peers; the earl of Derby was made duke of Hereford; the earl of Rutland, duke of Albemarle; the earl of Kent, duke of Surrey; the earl of Huntington, duke of Exeter; the earl of Nottingham, duke of Norfolk; the earl of Somerſet, marquis of Dor-

[x] Cotton, p. 399, 400. Dugdale, vol. ii. p. 171.

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1397. ſet; lord Spencer, earl of Gloceſter; Ralph Nevil, earl of Weſtmoreland; Thomas Piercy, earl of Worceſter; William Scrope, earl of Wiltſhire [y]. The parliament, after a ſeſſion of twelve days, was then adjourned to Shrewſbury. The King, before the departure of the members, exacted of them an oath for the perpetual maintenance and eſtabliſhment of their acts, ſimilar to that which had formerly been required by the duke of Gloceſter and his party, and which had already proved ſo vain and fruitleſs.

1398. 28th Jan. BOTH King and parliament met in the ſame diſpoſitions at Shrewſbury. So anxious was Richard for the ſecurity of theſe acts, that he obliged the lords and commons to ſwear anew to them on the croſs of Canterbury [z]; and he ſoon after procured a bull from the Pope, by which they were, as he imagined, perpetually ſecured and eſtabliſhed [a]. The parliament, on the other hand, conferred on him *for life* the duties on wool, wool-fells, and leather, and granted him beſides, a ſubſidy of one whole tenth and fifteenth and of a half tenth and fifteenth. They alſo reverſed the attainder of Treſilian and the other judges; and with the approbation of the preſent judges, declared the anſwers, for which theſe magiſtrates had been impeached, to be juſt and legal [b]: And they carried ſo far their retroſpect as to reverſe, on the petition of the lord Spencer, earl of Gloceſter, the attainder pronounced againſt the two Spencers in the reign of Edward II [c]. The antient hiſtory of England is nothing but a catalogue of reverſals: Every thing is in fluctuation and movement: One faction is continually undoing what

[y] Cotton, p. 370, 371.
[z] Ibid. p. 371.
[a] Walſingham, p. 355.
[b] Statutes at large, 21 Rich. II.
[c] Cotton, p. 372.

was eſtabliſhed by another: And the multiplied oaths, which each party requires for the ſecurity of the preſent acts, betray a perpetual conſciouſneſs of their inſtability.

THE parliament, before they were diſſolved, elected a committee of twelve lords and ſix commoners [d], whom they veſted with the whole power both of lords and commons, and endowed with full authority to finiſh all buſineſs, which had been laid before the houſes, and which they had not had leiſure to bring to a concluſion [e]. This was a very unuſual conceſſion; and tho' it was limited in the object, might, either immediately or as a precedent, have proved dangerous to the conſtitution: But the cauſe of that extraordinary meaſure was an event very ſingular and unexpected, which engaged the attention of the parliament.

AFTER the deſtruction of the duke of Gloceſter and the heads of that party, a miſunderſtanding broke out among thoſe noblemen, who had joined in the proſecution; and the King wanted either authority ſufficient to appeaſe it, or foreſight to prevent it. The duke of Hereford appeared in parliament, and accuſed the duke of Norfolk of having ſpoke to him, in private, many ſlanderous words of the King, and of having imputed to his majeſty an intention of ſubverting and deſtroying many of his principal nobility [f]. Norfolk denied the charge,

[d] The names of the commiſſioners were the dukes of Lancaſter, York, Albemarle, Surrey, and Exeter, the marquis of Dorſet, the earls of March, Saliſbury, Northumberland, Gloceſter, Wincheſter, and Wiltſhire, John Buſſey, Henry Green, John Ruſſel, Robert Teye, Henry Chelmeſwike, and John Golofre. It is to be remarked, that the duke of Lancaſter always concurred with the reſt in all their proceedings, even in the baniſhment of his ſon, which was afterwards ſo much complained of.

[e] Cotton, p. 372. Walſingham, p. 355.

[f] Cotton, p. 372. Parliamentary hiſtory, vol. i. p. 490.

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1398. gave Hereford the lie, and offered to prove his innocence by duel. The challenge was accepted: The time and place of combat were appointed: And as the event of this important trial by arms might require the interpoſition of legiſlative authority, the parliament thought it more ſuitable to delegate their power to a committee, than to prolong the ſeſſion beyond the uſual time, which cuſtom and general convenience had preſcribed to it [g].

THE duke of Hereford was certainly very little delicate in the point of honour, to betray a private converſation to the ruin of the perſon who had entruſted him; and we may thence be more inclined to believe the duke of Norfolk's denial, than the other's aſſeveration. But Norfolk had in theſe tranſactions betrayed an equal neglect of honour, which brings him entirely to a level with his antagoniſt. Tho' he had publickly joined with the duke of Gloceſter and that party in all the former violences put upon the King; and his name ſtands among the appellants who accuſed the duke of Ireland and the other miniſters: Yet was he not aſhamed publickly to impeach his former aſſociates for the very crimes, which he had concurred with them in committing, and his name encreaſes the liſt of thoſe appellants who brought them to a trial. Such were the principles and practices of thoſe antient knights and barons during the prevalence of the feudal government, and the reign of chivalry.

THE liſts for this deciſion of truth and right were appointed at Coventry before the King: All the nobility of England bandied into parties, and adhered either to the one duke or the other: The whole nation was held

[g] In the firſt year of Henry VI. when the authority of parliament was great, and when that aſſembly could leaſt be ſuſpected of lying under violence, a like conceſſion was made to the council from like motives of convenience. See Cotton, p. 564.

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in ſuſpence with regard to the event: But when the two champions appeared in the field, accoutered for the combat, the King interpoſed to prevent, both the preſent effuſion of ſuch noble blood, and the future conſequences of the quarrel. By the advice and authority of the parliamentary commiſſioners, he ſtopped the duel; and to ſhow his impartiality, he ordered, by the ſame authority, both the combatants to leave the kingdom [h], aſſigning one country for the place of Norfolk's exile, which he declared perpetual, and another for that of Hereford, which he limited to ten years. 1398.

HEREFORD was a man of great prudence and command of temper; and he behaved himſelf with ſo much ſubmiſſion in theſe delicate circumſtances, that the King, before his departure, promiſed to ſhorten the term of his exile four years; and he alſo granted him letters patent, by which he was empowered, in caſe any inheritance ſhould in the mean time fall to him, to enter immediately in poſſeſſion, and to poſtpone the doing homage till his return.

Baniſhment of Henry duke of Hereford.

THE weakneſs and fluctuation of Richard's councils appear no where more evident than in the conduct of this affair. No ſooner had Henry left the kingdom, than the King's jealouſy of the immenſe power and riches of that family revived; and he was ſenſible, that, by Gloceſter's death, he had only removed a counterpoize to the Lancaſtrian intereſt, which was now become formidable to his crown and kingdom. Being informed, that Hereford had opened a treaty of marriage with the daughter of the duke of Berry, uncle to the French King, he determined to prevent the finiſhing of an alliance, which would extend ſo much the intereſt of that nobleman into foreign countries; and he ſent over the earl of

[h] Cotton, p. 380. Walſingham, p. 356.

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3d Feb.

Saliſbury to Paris with a commiſſion for that purpoſe. The death of the duke of Lancaſter, which happened ſoon after, called upon him to take new reſolutions with regard to that opulent ſucceſſion. The preſent duke, in conſequence of the King's patent, deſired to be put in poſſeſſion of the eſtate and juriſdictions of his father: But Richard, afraid of ſtrengthening the hands of a man, whom he had already ſo ſenſibly injured, applied to the parliamentary commiſſioners, and perſuaded them that this affair was but an appendage of that buſineſs, which the parliament had delegated to them. By their authority, he revoked his letters patent, and retained poſſeſſion of the eſtate of Lancaſter: And by the ſame authority, he ſeized and tried the duke's attorney, who had procured and inſiſted on the letters, and had him condemned as a traitor, for faithfully executing that truſt to his maſter [i]. A moſt extravagant act of power! even tho' the King changed, in favour of the attorney, the penalty of death into that of baniſhment.

HENRY, the new duke of Lancaſter, had long acquired, by his conduct and abilities, the eſteem of the public; and having ſerved with diſtinction againſt the infidels in Lithuania, he had joined to his other praiſes thoſe of piety and valour, virtues which have at all times a great influence over mankind, and were, during thoſe ages, the qualities chiefly held in eſtimation [k]. He was connected with moſt of the principal nobility by blood, alliances, or friendſhip; and as the injury, done him by the King, might in its conſequences affect all of them, he eaſily brought them, by a ſenſe of common intereſt, to take part in his reſentment. The people, who muſt have an object of affection, and who found nothing in the King's perſon, which they could love or revere,

[i] Tyrrel, vol. iii. part 2. p. 991, from the records.

[k] Walſingham, p. 343.

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and were even diſguſted with many parts of his conduct[z], eaſily transferred to Henry that attachment, which the death of the duke of Gloceſter had left without any fixed direction. His misfortunes were lamented; the injuſtice, which he had ſuffered, complained of; and all men turned their eyes towards him, as the only perſon who could retrieve the loſt honour of the nation, or redreſs the ſuppoſed abuſes of the government. CHAP. XVII. 1399.

Return of Henry.

WHILE ſuch was the diſpoſition of the people, Richard had the imprudence to embark for Ireland, in order to revenge the death of his couſin, Roger earl of Marche, the preſumptive heir of the crown, who had lately been ſlain in a ſkirmiſh by the natives; and he thereby left the kingdom of England open to the attempts of his provoked and ambitious enemy. Henry, embarking at Nantz with a retinue of ſixty perſons, among whom were the archbiſhop of Canterbury and the young earl of Arundel, nephew to that prelate, landed at Ravenſpur in Yorkſhire; and was immediately joined by the earls of Northumberland and Weſtmoreland, two of the moſt potent barons in England. He here took a ſolemn oath, that he had no other purpoſe in this invaſion, than to recover the dutchy of Lancaſter, unjuſtly detained from him; and he invited all his friends in England, and all lovers of their country, to ſecond him in this reaſonable and moderate pretenſion. Every place was in commotion: The malecontents in all quarters flew to arms: London diſcovered the ſtrongeſt ſymptoms of its diſpo- 4th July.

[z] He levied fines from thoſe who had ten years before joined the duke of Gloceſter and his party: They were obliged to pay him money, before he would allow them to enjoy the benefit of the indemnity; and in the articles of charge againſt him, it is aſſerted, that the payment of one fine did not ſuffice. It is indeed likely, that his miniſters would abuſe the power put into their hands; and this grievance extended to very many people. Hiſtorians agree in repreſenting this practice as a great oppreſſion. See Otterburn, p. 199.

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sition to mutiny and rebellion: And Henry's army, encreasing on every day's march, soon amounted to the number of 60,000 men.

General insurrection.

THE duke of York was left guardian of the realm; a place to which his birth intitled him, but which both his slender abilities, and his natural connexions with the duke of Lancaster, rendered him utterly incapable of filling in such a dangerous emergency. All the chief nobility, who were attached to the crown, and who could either have seconded the guardian's good intentions, or have overawed his infidelity, had attended the King into Ireland; and the efforts of Richard's friends were every where more feeble than those of his enemies. The duke of York, however, appointed the rendezvous of his forces at St. Albans, and soon assembled an army of 40,000 men; but found them entirely destitute of zeal and attachment to the royal cause, and more inclined to join the party of the rebels. He hearkened therefore very readily to a message from Henry, who entreated him not to oppose a loyal and humble supplicant in the recovery of his legal patrimony; and the guardian even declared publickly that he would second his nephew in so reasonable a request. His army, embraced with acclamations the same party; and the duke of Lancaster, reinforced by their numbers, was now intirely master of the kingdom. He hastened to Bristol, into which some of the King's ministers had thrown themselves; and soon obliging that place to surrender, he yielded to the cries of the populace, and without giving them a trial, ordered the earl of Wiltshire, Sir John Bussy, and Sir Henry Green, whom he there took prisoners, to be led out to immediate execution.

THE King, receiving intelligence of this invasion and insurrection, hastened over from Ireland, and landed in Milford Haven with a body of 20,000 men: But

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even this army, ſo much inferior to the enemy, were either overawed by the general combination of the kingdom, or ſeized with the ſame ſpirit of rebellion; and they gradually deſerted him, till he found that he had not above 6000 men, who followed his ſtandard. It appeared, therefore, neceſſary to retire ſecretly from this ſmall body, which ſerved only to expoſe him to danger; and he fled to the iſle of Angleſea, where he purpoſed to embark either for Ireland or France, and there await the favourable opportunities, which the return of his ſubjects to a ſenſe of duty, or their future diſcontents againſt the duke of Lancaſter, would probably afford him. Henry, ſenſible of this danger, ſent to him the earl of Northumberland with the ſtrongeſt profeſſions of loyalty and ſubmiſſion; and that nobleman, by treachery and falſe oaths, made himſelf maſter of the King's perſon, and carried him to his enemy at Flint Caſtle. Richard was conducted to London, by the duke of Lancaſter, who was there received with the acclamations of the mutinous populace. It is pretended, that the recorder met him on the road; and in the name of the city, entreated him, for the public ſafety, to put Richard to death, with all his adherents who were priſoners [a]; but the duke very prudently determined to make many others participate of his guilt, before he would proceed to thoſe extremities. For this purpoſe, he iſſued writs of election in the King's name, and appointed the immediate meeting of a parliament at Weſtminſter.

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SUCH of the peers, as were the moſt devoted to the King, were either fled or impriſoned; and no opponents, even among the barons, dared to appear againſt Henry amid that ſcene of outrage and violence, which commonly attends revolutions, more eſpecially in England during thoſe turbulent ages: And it is alſo eaſy to ima-

[a] Walſingham.

gine,

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1399. gine, that a houſe of commons, elected during this univerſal ferment, and this triumph of the Lancaſtrian party, would be extremely attached to that cauſe, and ready to ſecond every ſuggeſtion of their leader. That order, being as yet of too little weight to ſtem the torrent, was always carried along with it, and ſerved only to encreaſe the violence, which the public intereſt required it ſhould endeavour to controul. The duke of Lancaſter therefore, ſenſible that he would be entirely maſter, began to carry his views to the crown itſelf; and he deliberated with his partizans concerning the moſt proper means of effecting his violent purpoſe. He firſt extorted a reſignation from Richard [b]; but as he knew, that that deed would plainly appear the reſult of force and fear, he alſo propoſed, notwithſtanding the danger of the precedent to himſelf and his poſterity, to have him ſolemnly depoſed in parliament for his pretended tyranny and miſconduct. A charge, conſiſting of thirty-three articles, was accordingly drawn up againſt him, and preſented to that aſſembly [c].

Depoſition of the King.

28th] Sept.

If we examine theſe articles, which are expreſſed with extreme acrimony againſt Richard, we ſhall find, that, except ſome raſh ſpeeches, which are imputed to him [d], and of whoſe reality, as they are ſaid to have paſſed in private converſation, we may very reaſonably entertain ſome doubt; the chief amount of the charge is contained in his violent conduct during the two laſt years of his reign, and naturally divides itſelf into two principal heads. The firſt and moſt conſiderable is the revenge, which he took on the princes and great barons, who had formerly uſurped, and ſtill perſevered in controuling and threat-

[b] Knyghton, p. 2744. Otterbourne, p. 212.

[c] Tyrrel, vol. iii. part 2. p. 1008, from the records. Knyghton, p. 2746. Otterbourne, p. 214.

[d] Art. 15. 26.

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ning his authority; the ſecond is the violation of the laws and general privileges of his people. But the former, however irregular in many of its circumſtances, was fully ſupported by authority of parliament, and was but a copy of the violence, which the princes and barons themſelves, during their former triumph, had exerciſed againſt him and his party. The detention of Lancaſter's eſtate was, properly ſpeaking, a revocation, by the appearance at leaſt of parliamentary authority, of a grace, which the King himſelf had formerly granted him. The murder of Gloceſter (for the ſecret execution, however merited, of that prince, certainly deſerves this appellation) was a private deed, formed not any precedent, and implied not any aſſumed or arbitrary power of the crown, which could juſtly give umbrage to the people. It was really the effect of the King's weakneſs, rather than ambition; and proves, that, inſtead of being dangerous to the conſtitution, he poſſeſſed not even the authority requiſite for the execution of the laws.

THE ſecond head of accuſation, as it conſiſts moſtly of general facts, was framed by Richard's inveterate enemies, and was never allowed to be anſwered by him or his friends; it is more difficult to form a judgment of. The greateſt part of theſe grievances, objected to Richard, ſeems to be the exertion of arbitrary prerogatives; ſuch as the diſpenſing power [e], levying purveyance [f], employing the marſhal's court [g], extorting loans [h], granting protections from law-ſuits [i]; prerogatives, which, though often complained of, had often been exerciſed by his predeceſſors, and ſtill continued to be ſo by his ſucceſſors. But whether his irregular acts of this kind were more frequent and injudicious and violent than uſual, or were only laid hold of and more exaggerated,

[e] Art. 13. 17, 18. [f] Art. 22.
[g] Art. 27. [h] Art. 14. [i] Art. 16.

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by the factions, to which the weakneſs of his reign had given birth, we are not able at this diſtance to determine with certainty. There is however one circumſtance, in which his conduct is viſibly different from that of his grandfather: He is not accuſed of having impoſed one arbitrary tax, without conſent of parliament, during his whole reign [k]: Scarce a year paſſed during the reign of Edward, which was free from complaints with regard to this grievous and dangerous exertion of authority. But, perhaps, the great aſcendant, which Edward had acquired over his people, together with his great prudence, enabled him to make a uſe very advantageous to his ſubjects of this and other arbitrary prerogatives, and rendered them a ſmaller grievance in his hands, than a leſs abſolute authority in thoſe of his grandſon. This is a point, which it would be raſh for us to decide poſitively on either ſide; but it is certain, that a charge drawn up by the duke of Lancaſter, and aſſented to by a parliament, ſituated in theſe circumſtances, forms no manner of preſumption with regard to the unuſual irregularity or violence of the King's conduct in this particular [l].

When the charge againſt Richard was preſented to the parliament, tho' it was liable, almoſt in every article, to

[k] We learn from Cotton, p. 362. that the King, by his chancellor, told the commons, *that they were ſunderly bound to him, and namely in forbearing to charge them with ..fmes and fifteens, the which he meant* no more *to charge them in his own perſon.* Theſe words *no more* allude to the practice of his predeceſſors: He had not himſelf impoſed any arbitrary taxes: Even the parliament, in the articles of his depoſition, tho' they complain of heavy taxes, affirm not, that they were impoſed illegally or by arbitrary will.

[l] To ſhow how little credit is to be given to this charge againſt Richard, we may obſerve, that a law in the 13 Edw. III. had been made againſt the continuance of ſheriffs for more than one year: But the inconvenience of changes having afterwards appeared from experience, the commons in the twentieth of this King, applied by petition that

to objections, it was not canvaſſed, nor examined, nor diſputed in either houſe, and ſeemed to be received with unanimous approbation. One man alone, the biſhop of Carliſle, had the courage, amidſt this univerſal diſloyalty and violence, to appear in defence of his unhappy maſter, and to plead his cauſe againſt all the power of the prevailing party. Tho' ſome topics, employed by that virtuous prelate, may ſeem to favour too much the doctrine of paſſive obedience, and to make too large a ſacrifice of the rights of mankind; he was naturally puſhed into that extreme by his abhorrence of the preſent licentious factions; and ſuch intrepidity, as well as diſintereſtedneſs of behaviour, proves, that, whatever his ſpeculative principles were, his heart was elevated far above the meanneſs and abject ſubmiſſion of a ſlave. He repreſented to the parliament, that all the abuſes of government, which could juſtly be imputed to Richard, far from amounting to tyranny, were merely the reſult of error, youth, or miſguided council, and admitted of a remedy, more eaſy and ſalutary, than a total ſubverſion of the conſtitution. That even had they been much more violent and dangerous, than they really were, they had chiefly proceeded from former examples of reſiſtance,

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that the ſheriffs might be continued; tho' that petition had not been enacted into a ſtatute, by reaſon of other diſagreeable circumſtances, which attended it. See Cotton, p. 361. It was certainly a very moderate exerciſe of the diſpenſing power for the King to continue the ſheriffs, after he found that that practice would be acceptable to his ſubjects, and had been applied for by one houſe of parliament: Yet is this made an article of charge againſt him by the preſent parliament. See art. 18. Walſingham, ſpeaking of a period early in Richard's minority, ſays, *But what do acts of parliament ſignify, when, after they are made, they take no effect; ſince the King, by the advice of the privy-council, takes upon him to alter, or wholly ſet aſide, all thoſe things, which by general conſent had been ordained in parliament?* If Richard, therefore, exerciſed the diſpenſing power, he was warranted by the examples of his uncles and grandfather, and indeed of all his predeceſſors from Henry III.

which,

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which, making the prince ſenſible of his precarious ſituation, had obliged him to eſtabliſh his throne by irregular and arbitrary expedients. That a rebellious diſpoſition in ſubjects was the principal cauſe of tyranny in Kings: Laws could never ſecure the ſubject, which did not give ſecurity to the ſovereign: And if the maxim of inviolable loyalty, which formed the baſis of the Engliſh government, were once rejected, the privileges, belonging to the ſeveral orders of the ſtate, inſtead of being fortified by that licentiouſneſs, would thereby loſe the ſureſt foundation of their force and ſtability. That the parliamentary depoſition of Edward II. far from making a precedent, which could controul this maxim, was only the example of ſucceſsful violence; and it was ſufficiently to be lamented, that crimes were ſo often committed in the world, without eſtabliſhing principles which might juſtify and authorize them. That even that precedent, falſe and dangerous as it was, could never warrant the preſent exceſſes, which were ſo much greater, and which would entail diſtraction and miſery on the nation, to their lateſt poſterity. That the ſucceſſion, at leaſt, of the crown, was then preſerved inviolate: The lineal heir was placed on the throne: And the people had an opportunity, by their legal obedience to him, of making atonement for the violences which they had committed againſt his predeceſſor. That a deſcendant of Lionel, duke of Clarence, the elder brother of the late duke of Lancaſter, had been declared in parliament ſucceſſor to the crown: He had left poſterity: And their title, however it might be overpowered by preſent force and faction, could never be obliterated from the minds of the people. That if the turbulent diſpoſition alone of the nation, had overturned the well-eſtabliſhed throne of ſo good a prince as Richard; what bloody commotions muſt enſue, when the ſame cauſe was united to the motive of reſtoring the legal and undoubted heir to his

authority? That the new government, intended to be eſtabliſhed, would ſtand on no principles; and would ſcarce retain any pretence, by which it could challenge the obedience of men of ſenſe or virtue. That the claim of lineal deſcent was ſo groſs as ſcarcely to deceive the moſt ignorant of the populace: Conqueſt could never be pleaded by a rebel againſt his ſovereign: The conſent of the people had no authority in a monarchy not derived from conſent, but eſtabliſhed by hereditary right; and however the nation might be juſtified, in depoſing the miſguided Richard, it could never have any reaſon for paſſing by his lawful heir and ſucceſſor, who was plainly innocent. And that the duke of Lancaſter would give them but a bad ſpecimen of the legal moderation, which might be expected from his future government, if he added, to the crime of his paſt rebellion, the guilt of excluding the family, which, both by right of blood, and by declaration of parliament, would, in caſe of Richard's deceaſe, or voluntary reſignation, have been received as the undoubted heirs of the monarchy [m].

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All the circumſtances of this event, compared to thoſe attending the late revolution in 1688, ſhow the difference between a great and civilized nation, deliberately vindicating its eſtabliſhed privileges, and a turbulent and barbarous ariſtocracy, plunging headlong from the extremities of one faction into thoſe of another. This noble freedom of the biſhop of Carliſle, inſtead of being applauded, was not ſo much as tolerated: He was immediately arreſted, by orders of the duke of Lancaſter, and ſent a priſoner to the abbey of St. Albans. No farther debate was attempted: Thirty-three long articles of charge were, in one meeting, voted

[m] Sir John Heywarde, p. 101.

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againſt Richard; and voted unanimouſly by the ſame peers and prelates, who, a little before, had voluntarily and unanimouſly authorized thoſe very acts of violence, of which they now complained. That prince was depoſed by the ſuffrages of both houſes; and the throne being now vacant, the duke of Lancaſter ſtepped forth, and having croſſed himſelf on his forehead, and on his breaſt, and called upon the name of Chriſt [n], he pronounced theſe words, which we ſhall give in the original language, becauſe of their ſingularity.

In the name of Fadher, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, I Henry of Lancaſter, challenge this rewme of Ynglande, and the croun, with all the membres, and the appurtenances; als I that am deſcendit by right line of the blode, coming fro the gude King Henry therde, and throge that right that God of his grace hath ſent me, with helpe of kyn, and of my frendes to recover it; the which rewme was in poynt to be ondone by defaut of governance, and ondoying of the gude lawes [o].

In order to underſtand this ſpeech, it muſt be obſerved, that there was a ſilly ſtory, received among ſome of the loweſt vulgar, that Edmond earl of Lancaſter, ſon of Henry III. was really the elder brother of Edward I; but that, by reaſon of ſome deformities in his perſon, he had been poſtponed in the ſucceſſion, and his younger brother impoſed on the nation in his ſtead. As the preſent duke of Lancaſter inherited from Edmond by his mother, this genealogy made him the true heir of the monarchy; and it is therefore inſinuated in Henry's ſpeech: But the abſurdity was too groſs to be openly avowed either by him, or by the parliament. The caſe is the ſame with regard to his right of conqueſt: He was a ſubject who rebelled againſt his ſovereign: He entered the kingdom with a retinue of no more than ſixty per-

[n] Cotton, p. 389.

[o] Knyghton, p. 2757.

ſons:

ſons: He could not therefore be the conqueror of England; and this right is accordingly inſinuated, not avowed. Still there is a third claim, derived from his merits in ſaving the nation from tyranny and oppreſſion; and this claim is alſo inſinuated: But as it ſeemed, by its nature, better calculated as a reaſon for his being *elected* King by a free choice, which he was determined never to avow, than for giving him an immediate right of poſſeſſion, he durſt not ſpeak openly even on this head; and to obviate any notion of election, he challenges the crown as his due, either by acquiſition or inheritance. The whole forms ſuch a piece of jargon and nonſenſe, as is almoſt without example: No objection however was made to it in the parliament: The unanimous voice of lords and commons placed Henry on the throne: He became King, nobody could tell how or wherefore: The title of the houſe of Marche, formerly recognized by parliament, was neither invalidated nor repealed; but paſſed over in total ſilence: And as a concern for the liberties of the people ſeems to have had no hand in this revolution, their right to diſpoſe of the government, as well as all their other privileges, was left preciſely on the ſame footing as before. But Henry, having, when he claimed the crown, dropped ſome obſcure hint concerning conqueſt, which, it was thought, might endanger theſe privileges, he ſoon after made a public declaration, that he did not thereby intend to deprive any one of his franchiſes or liberties [p]: Which was the only circumſtance, that had common ſenſe or meaning, in all theſe tranſactions.

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THE ſubſequent events diſcover the ſame headlong violence of conduct, and the ſame rude notions of civil government. The depoſition of Richard diſſolved the parliament: It was neceſſary to ſummon a new one: 6th Oct.

[p] Knyghton, p. 2759. Otterborn, p. 220.

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1399. And Henry, in ſix days after, called together, without any new election, the ſame members; and this aſſembly he denominated a new parliament. They were employed in the uſual taſk of reverſing every deed of the oppoſite party. All the acts of the laſt parliament of Richard, which had been confirmed by their oaths, and by a papal bull, were abrogated: All the acts, which had paſſed in the parliament where Gloceſter prevailed, and which had been abrogated by Richard, were again reeſtabliſhed [q]: The anſwers of Treſillian, and the other judges, which a parliament had annulled, but which a new parliament and new judges had approved, here received a ſecond condemnation. The peers, who had accuſed Gloceſter, Arundel, and Warwic, and who had received higher titles for that piece of ſervice, were all of them degraded from their new dignities: Even the practice of proſecuting appeals in parliament was wholly aboliſhed; and trials were reſtored to the courſe of common law [r]. The natural effect of this conduct was to render the people giddy with ſuch rapid and perpetual changes, and to make them loſe all notions of right and wrong in the meaſures of government.

23d Oct. THE earl of Northumberland made a motion, in the houſe of peers, with regard to the unhappy prince whom they had depoſed. He aſked them, what advice they would give the King for the future treatment of him; ſince Henry was reſolved to ſpare his life. They unanimouſly replied, that he ſhould be impriſoned under a ſecure guard, in ſome ſecret place, and ſhould be deprived of all commerce with any of his friends or partizans. It was eaſy to foreſee, that he would not remain long alive in the hands of ſuch barbarous and ſanguinary enemies.

Murder of the King. Hiſtorians differ with regard to the manner, in which he

[q] Cotton, p. 390. [r] Henry iv. cap. 14.

was

was murdered. It was long the prevailing opinion, that Sir Piers Exton, and others of his guards, fell upon him in the caſtle of Pomfret, where he was confined, and diſpatched him with their halberts. But it is more probable, that he was ſtarved to death in priſon; and after all ſubſiſtence was denied him, he prolonged his unhappy life, it is ſaid, for a fortnight, before he reached the end of his miſeries. This account is more conſiſtent with the ſtory, that his body was expoſed in public, and that no marks of violence were obſerved upon it. He died in the thirty-fourth year of his age, and the twenty-third of his reign. He left no poſterity, either legitimate or illegitimate.

His character.

ALL the writers, who have tranſmitted to us the hiſtory of Richard, compoſed their works during the reigns of the Lancaſtrian princes; and candor requires, that we ſhould not give entire credit to the reproaches which have been thrown upon his memory. But after making all proper abatements, he ſtill appears to have been a weak prince, and unfit for government, leſs for want of natural parts and capacity, than of ſolid judgment and a good education. He was violent in his temper, profuſe in his expences; fond of idle ſhow and magnificence; devoted to favourites, and addicted to pleaſure: Paſſions, all of them, the moſt inconſiſtent with a prudent œconomy, and conſequently dangerous in a limited and mixed government. Had he poſſeſſed the talents of gaining, and ſtill more thoſe of over-awing, his great barons, he might have eſcaped all the misfortunes of his reign, and been allowed to carry much farther his oppreſſions over the people, if he really was guilty of any, without their daring to rebel, or even to murmur againſt him. But when the grandees were tempted, by his want of prudence and of vigour, to reſiſt his authority, and execute the moſt violent enterprizes upon him, he was naturally

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led to ſeek for an opportunity of retaliation; juſtice was neglected; the lives of the chief nobility ſacrificed; and all theſe evils ſeem to have proceeded leſs from a ſettled deſign of eſtabliſhing arbitrary power, than from the inſolence of victory, and the neceſſities of the King's ſituation. The manners indeed of the age were the chief ſource of ſuch violences: Laws, which were feebly executed in peaceable times, loſt all their authority during public convulſions: Both parties were alike guilty: Or if any difference may be remarked between them, we ſhall find, that the authority of the crown, being more legal, was commonly carried, when it prevailed, to leſs deſperate extremities, than thoſe of the ariſtocracy.

On comparing the conduct and events of this reign, with thoſe of the preceding, we ſhall find equal reaſon to admire Edward, and to blame Richard; but the circumſtance of oppoſition, ſurely, will not lie in the ſtrict regard paid by the former to national privileges, and the neglect of them by the latter. On the contrary, the prince of ſmall abilities, as he felt his want of power, ſeems to have been always more moderate in this reſpect than the other. Every parliament, aſſembled during the reign of Edward, remonſtrate againſt the exertion of ſome arbitrary prerogative or other: We hear not any complaints of that kind during the reign of Richard, till the aſſembling of his laſt parliament, which was ſummoned by his inveterate enemies, which dethroned him, which framed their complaints during the time of the moſt furious convulſions, and whoſe teſtimony can therefore have, on that account, much leſs authority with every equitable judge[a]. Both theſe princes experienced the encroachments of the Great upon their authority. Edward, reduced to neceſſities, was obliged to make

[a] Compare, in this view, the abridgment of the records, by Sir Robert Cotton, during theſe two reigns.

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an expreſs bargain with his parliament, and to ſell ſome of his prerogatives for preſent ſupply; but as they were acquainted with his genius and capacity, they ventured not to demand any exorbitant conceſſions, or ſuch as were incompatible with regal and ſovereign power: The weakneſs of Richard tempted the parliament to extort a commiſſion, which in a manner dethroned the prince, and transferred the ſceptre into the hands of the nobility. The events were alſo ſuitable to the character of each. Edward had no ſooner got the ſupply, than he departed from the engagements, which had induced the parliament to grant it; he openly told his people, that he had but *diſſembled* with them when he ſeemed to make them theſe conceſſions; and he reſumed and retained all his prerogatives. But Richard, becauſe he was detected in conſulting and deliberating with the judges on the lawfulneſs of reſtoring the conſtitution, found his barons immediately in arms againſt him; was deprived of his liberty; ſaw his favourites, his miniſters, his tutor, butchered before his face, or baniſhed and attainted; and was obliged to give way to all this violence. There cannot be a more remarkable oppoſition between the fortunes of two princes: It were happy for ſociety, that this oppoſition depended always on the juſtice or injuſtice of the meaſures which men embrace; and not rather on the different degrees of prudence and vigour, with which theſe meaſures are ſupported.

Miſcellaneous tranſactions during this reign.

THERE was a ſenſible decay of the authority of the eccleſiaſtics during this period. The diſguſt, which the laity had received from the numerous uſurpations both of the court of Rome, and of their own clergy, had weaned the kingdom very much from ſuperſtition; and ſtrong ſymptoms appeared, from time to time, of a general deſire to ſhake off the bondage of the Romiſh church. In the committee of eighteen, to whom

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Richard's laſt parliament delegated their whole power, there is not the name of one eccleſiaſtic to be found; a neglect which is almoſt without example, while the catholic religion ſubſiſted in England [b].

THE averſion entertained againſt the eſtabliſhed church ſoon found principles and tenets, and reaſonings, by which it could juſtify and ſupport itſelf. John Wickliffe, a ſecular prieſt, educated at Oxford, began, in the latter end of Edward III. to ſpread the doctrines of reformation by his diſcourſes, ſermons and writings; and he made many diſciples among men of all ranks and ſtations. He ſeems to have been a man of parts and learning; and has the honour of being the firſt perſon in Europe, who publicly called in queſtion thoſe doctrines, which had univerſally paſſed for certain and undiſputed during ſo many ages. Wickliffe himſelf, as well as his diſciples, who received the name of Wickliffites or Lollards, was diſtinguiſhed by a remarkable auſterity of life and manners; a circumſtance common to almoſt all thoſe

[b] The following paſſage in Cotton's abridgment, p. 196, ſhows a ſtrange prejudice againſt the church and churchmen. *The commons afterwards coming into the parliament, and making their proteſtation, ſhewed, that for want of good redreſs about the King's perſon in his houſhold, in all his courts, touching maintainers in every county, and purveyors, the commons were daily pilled, and nothing defended againſt the enemy, and that it ſhould ſhortly deprive the King and undo the ſtate. Wherefore in the ſame government, they entirely require redreſs. Whereupon the King appointed ſundry biſhops, lords and nobles, to ſit in privy council about theſe matters: Who ſince that they muſt begin at the head and go at the requeſt of the commons, they in the preſence of the King charged his confeſſor not to come into the court but upon the four principal feſtivals.* We ſhould little expect that a Popiſh privy council, in order to preſerve the King's morals, ſhould order his confeſſor to be kept at a diſtance from him. This incident happened in the minority of Richard. As the popes had for a long time reſided at Avignon, and the majority of the ſacred college were Frenchmen, this circumſtance naturally encreaſed the averſion of the nation to the papal power: But the prejudice againſt the Engliſh clergy cannot be accounted for from that cauſe.

who

who dogmatize in any new way, both becauſe men, who draw to them the attention of the public, and expoſe themſelves to the odium of great multitudes, are obliged to be very guarded in their conduct, and becauſe few, who have a ſtrong propenſity to pleaſure or buſineſs, will enter upon ſo difficult and laborious an undertaking. The doctrines of Wickliffe, being derived from his ſearch into the ſcriptures and into eccleſiaſtical antiquity, were nearly the ſame with thoſe propagated by the reformers in the ſixteenth century: He only carried ſome of them farther than was done by the more ſober part of theſe reformers. He denied the doctrine of the real preſence, the ſupremacy of the church of Rome, the merit of monaſtic vows: He maintained, that the ſcripture was the ſole rule of faith; that the church was dependant on the ſtate, and ought to be reformed by it; that the clergy ought to poſſeſs no eſtates; that the begging friars were a general nuiſance, and ought not to be ſupported [c]; that the numerous ceremonies of the church were hurtful to true piety: He aſſerted, that oaths were unlawful, that dominion was founded in grace, that every thing was ſubject to fate and deſtiny, and that all men were predeſtinated either to eternal ſalvation or reprobation [d]. From the whole of his doctrines, Wickliffe appears to have been ſtrongly tinctured with enthuſiaſm, and to have been thereby the better qualified to oppoſe a church, whoſe diſtinguiſhing character was ſuperſtition.

THE propagation of theſe principles gave great alarm to the clergy; and a bull was iſſued by Pope Gregory XI. for taking Wickliffe into cuſtody, and examining

[c] Walſingham, p. 191. 208. 283, 284. Spelman concil. vol. ii. p. 630. Knyghton, p. 2657.

[d] Harpsfield, p. 668. 673, 674. Waldenſ. tom. i. lib. 3. art. 1. cap. 8.

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into the ſcope of his opinions [f]. Courteney, biſhop of London, cited him before his tribunal; but the reformer had now got very powerful protectors, who ſcreened him from the eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction. The duke of Lancaſter, who then governed the kingdom, encouraged the principles of Wickliffe; and he made no ſcruple, as well as lord Piercy, the mareſchal, to appear openly in court with him, in order to give him countenance upon his trial: He even inſiſted, that Wickliffe ſhould ſit in the biſhop's preſence, while his principles were examined: Courteney exclaimed againſt this inſult: The mob of London, thinking their prelate affronted, attacked the duke and mareſchal, who eſcaped from their hands with ſome difficulty [g]. And the populace, ſoon after, broke into the houſes of both theſe noblemen, threatned their perſons, and plundered their goods. The biſhop of London had the merit of appeaſing their fury and reſentment.

THE duke of Lancaſter, however, ſtill continued his protection to Wickliffe, during the minority of Richard; and the principles of that reformer had ſo far propagated themſelves, that when the Pope ſent to Oxford a new bull againſt theſe doctrines, the univerſity deliberated for ſome time, whether they ſhould receive the bull; and they never took any vigorous meaſures in conſequence of the papal orders [h]. Even the populace of London were at length brought to entertain favourable ſentiments of this reformer: When he was cited before a ſynod at Lambeth, the mob broke into the aſſembly, and ſo overawed the prelates, who found both the people and the court againſt them, that they diſmiſſed him without any farther cenſures.

[f] Spelm. conc. vol. ii. p. 621. Walſingham, p. 201, 202, 203.
[g] Harpsfield in Hiſt. Wickl. p. 683.
[h] Wood's Ant. Oxon. lib. 1. p. 191, &c. Walſingham, p. 201.

THE

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THE clergy, we may well believe, were more wanting in power than inclination to puniſh this new hereſy, which ſtruck at all their credit, poſſeſſions and authority. But there was hitherto no law in England, by which the ſecular arm was empowered to ſupport orthodoxy; and the eccleſiaſtics endeavoured to ſupply the defect by a very extraordinary and very unwarrantable artifice. In the year 1381, there was an act paſſed, enjoining ſheriffs to apprehend the preachers of hereſy and their abettors; but this ſtatute had been ſurreptitiouſly obtained by the clergy, and had the formality of an enrolment without the conſent of the commons. In the ſubſequent ſeſſion, the lower houſe complained of this fraud; affirmed, that they had no intention to bind themſelves to the prelates farther than their anceſtors had done before them; and required that the pretended ſtatute ſhould be repealed, which was done accordingly [i]. But it is remarkable, that, notwithſtanding this vigilance of the commons, the clergy had ſo much art and influence, that the repeal was ſuppreſſed, and the act, which never had any legal authority, remains to this day upon the ſtatute book [k]: Tho' the clergy ſtill thought proper to keep it in reſerve, and not proceed to the immediate execution of it.

BUT beſides the defect of power in the church, which ſaved Wickliffe, that reformer himſelf, notwithſtanding his enthuſiaſm, ſeems not to have been actuated by the ſpirit of martyrdom; and in all ſubſequent trials before the prelates, he ſo explained away his doctrine by tortured meanings, as to render it quite innocent and inoffenſive [l]. Moſt of his followers imitated his cautious diſpoſition, and ſaved themſelves either by recantations or explanations. He died of a palſy in the year 1385 at his

[i] Cotton's abridgment, p. 285.
[k] 5 Rich. II. chap. 5.
[l] Walſingham, p. 206. Knyghton, p. 2655, 2656.

rectory

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rectory of Lutterworth in the county of Leiceſter; and the clergy, mortified that he ſhould have eſcaped their vengeance, took care, beſides aſſuring people of his eternal damnation, to repreſent his laſt diſtemper as a viſible judgment of heaven upon him for his multiplied hereſies and impieties [n].

THE proſelytes, however, of Wickliffe's opinions ſtill encreaſed in England [o]: Some monkiſh writers repreſent the half of the kingdom as infected by thoſe principles: They were carried over to Bohemia by ſome youth of that nation, who ſtudied in Oxford: But tho' the age ſeemed ſtrongly diſpoſed to receive them, affairs were not yet fully ripe for this great revolution; and the finiſhing blow to eccleſiaſtical power was reſerved to a period of more curioſity, literature, and inclination for novelties.

MEANWHILE, the Engliſh parliament continued to check the clergy and the court of Rome by more ſober and more legal expedients. They enacted anew the ſtatute of *proviſors*, and affixed higher penalties to the tranſgreſſion of it, which, in ſome inſtances, was even made capital [p]. The court of Rome had fallen upon a new device, which encreaſed their authority over the prelates: The Pope, who found that the expedient of arbitrarily depriving them was violent, and liable to oppoſition, attained the ſame end by transferring ſuch of them, as were obnoxious, to poorer ſees, and even to nominal ſees, *in partibus infidelium*. It was thus that the archbiſhop of York, and the biſhops of Durham and Chicheſter, the King's miniſters, had been treated after the prevalence of Gloceſter's faction: The good biſhop of Carliſle met with the ſame fate after the acceſſion of

[n] Walſingham, p. 312. Ypod. Neuſt. p. 537.
[o] Knyghton, p. 2663.
[p] 13 Rich. II. cap. 3. 16 Rich. II. cap. 4.

Henry

Henry IV. For the Pope always joined with the prevailing powers, when they did not thwart his pretenſions. The parliament, in the reign of Richard, enacted a law againſt this abuſe: And the King made a general remonſtrance to the court of Rome againſt all thoſe impoſitions, which he calls *horrible exceſſes* of that court [q]. CHAP. XVII. 1399.

It was uſual at this time for the church, that they might elude the mortmain act, to make their votaries leave lands in truſt to certain perſons, under whoſe name the clergy enjoyed the benefit of the bequeſt: The parliament alſo ſtopped the progreſs of this abuſe [r]. In the 17th of the King, the commons prayed, *that remedy might be had againſt ſuch religious perſons as cauſe their villains to marry free women inheritable, whereby the eſtate comes to thoſe religious hands by colluſion* [s]. This was a new device of the clergy.

The papacy was at this time ſomewhat weakened by a ſchiſm, which laſted for forty years, and gave great ſcandal to the devoted partizans of the holy ſee. After the Popes had reſided many years at Avignon, Gregory XI. was perſuaded to return to Rome; and upon his death, which happened in 1380, the Romans, reſolute to fix, for the future, the ſeat of the papacy in Italy, beſieged the cardinals in the conclave, and conſtrained them, tho' they were moſtly Frenchmen, to elect Urban VI. an Italian, into that high dignity. The French cardinals, ſo ſoon as they recovered their liberty, fled from Rome, and proteſting againſt the forced election, choſe Robert, ſon of the count of Geneva, who took the name of Clement VII. and reſided at Avignon. All the kingdoms of Chriſtendom, according to their ſeveral intereſts and inclinations, were divided between

[q] Rymer, vol. vii. p. 672.

[r] Knyghton, p. 27. 38. Cotton, p. 355.

[s] Cotton, p. 355.

theſe

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theſe two pontiffs. The court of France adhered to Clement, and were followed by their allies, the King of Caſtile, and King of Scotland: England of courſe was thrown into the other party, and declared for Urban. Thus the appellation of *Clementines* and *Urbaniſts* diſtracted Europe for ſeveral years; and each party damned the other as ſchiſmatics, and as rebels to the true vicar of Chriſt. But this circumſtance, tho' it weakened the papal authority, had not ſo great an effect as might naturally be imagined. Tho' any King could eaſily, at firſt, make his kingdom embrace the party of one Pope or the other, or even keep it ſome time in ſuſpence between them, he could not ſo eaſily transfer his obedience at pleaſure: The people attached themſelves to their own party as to a religious opinion; and conceived an extreme abhorrence to the oppoſite party, whom they regarded as little better than Saracens or infidels. Cruſades were even undertaken in this quarrel; and the zealous biſhop of Norwich, in particular, led over, in 1382, near 60,000 bigots into Flanders againſt the Clementines; but after loſing a great part of his followers, he returned with diſgrace into England [t]. Each Pope, ſenſible, from this prevailing ſpirit of the people, that the kingdom, which once embraced his cauſe, would always adhere to him, boldly maintained all the pretenſions of his ſee, and ſtood not much more in awe of the ſovereigns, than if his authority had not been endangered by a rival.

WE meet with this preamble to a law enacted at the very beginning of this reign: "Whereas divers perſons "of ſmall garriſon of land or other poſſeſſions do make "great retinue of people, as well of eſquires as of

[t] Froiſſart, lib. 2. chap. 133, 134. Walſingham, p. 298, 299, 300, &c. Knyghton, p. 2671.

"others,

" others, in many parts of the realm, giving to them " hats and other livery of one ſuit by year, taking again " towards them the value of the ſame livery or percaſe " the double value, by ſuch covenant and aſſurance, that " every of them ſhall maintain other in all quarrels, be " they reaſonable or unreaſonable, to the great miſ- " chief and oppreſſion of the people, &c [u]". This preamble contains a true picture of the ſtate of the kingdom. The laws had been ſo feebly executed, even during the long, active, and vigilant reign of Edward III. that no ſubject could truſt to their protection. Men openly aſſociated themſelves, under the patronage of ſome great man, for their mutual defence. They had public badges by which their confederacy was diſtinguiſhed. They ſupported each other in all quarrels, iniquities, extortions, murders, robberies, and other crimes. Their chieftain was more their ſovereign than the King himſelf; and their own band was more connected with them than their country. Hence the perpetual turbulence, diſorders, factions, and civil wars of thoſe times: Hence the ſmall regard paid to a character or the opinion of the public: Hence the large diſcretionary prerogatives of the crown, and the danger which might have enſued from the too great limitation of them. If the King had poſſeſſed no arbitrary powers, while all the nobles aſſumed and exerciſed them, there muſt have enſued an abſolute anarchy in the ſtate.

ONE great miſchief, attending theſe confederacies, was the extorting from the King pardons for the moſt enormous crimes. The parliament often endeavoured, in the laſt reign, to deprive the prince of this prerogative; but in the preſent, they were contented with an

[u] 1 Rich. II. chap. 7.

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abridgement of it. They enacted, that no pardon for rapes or murder from malice prepenſe ſhould be valid, unleſs the crime was particularly ſpecified in it [x]. There were alſo ſome other circumſtances required for the paſſing any pardons of this kind: An excellent law; but ill obſerved, like moſt laws, which thwart the manners of the people, and the prevailing cuſtoms of the times.

It is eaſy to obſerve, from theſe voluntary aſſociations among the people, that the whole force of the feudal ſyſtem was in a manner diſſolved, and that the Engliſh had nearly returned in that particular to the ſame ſituation in which they ſtood before the Norman conqueſt. It was indeed impoſſible, that that ſyſtem could long ſubſiſt, under the conſtant revolutions, to which landed property is every where ſubject. When the great feudal baronies were firſt erected, the lord lived in opulence in the midſt of his vaſſals: He was in a ſituation to protect and cheriſh and defend them: The quality of patron naturally united itſelf to that of ſuperior: And theſe two principles of authority mutually ſupported each other. But when, by the various diviſions and mixtures of property, a man's ſuperior came to live at a diſtance from him, and could no longer give him ſhelter or countenance; the tie gradually became more fictitious than real: New connexions from neighbourhood or other cauſes were formed: Protection was ſought by voluntary ſervices and attachment: The appearance of valour, ſpirit, ability in any great man extended his intereſt very far: And if the ſovereign was deficient in theſe qualities, he was equally, if not more expoſed to the uſurpations of the ariſtocracy than even during the vigour of the feudal ſyſtem.

[x] 13 Rich. II. chap. 1.

THE

CHAP. XVII. 1399.

THE greateſt novelty introduced into the civil government during this reign was the creation of peers by patent. The lord Beauchamp of Holt was the firſt peer, who was advanced to the houſe of lords in this manner. The practice of levying benevolences is alſo mentioned in this reign.

CHAP. XVIII.

HENRY IV.

Title of the King——An inſurrection——An inſurrection in Wales——The earl of Northumberland rebels——Battle of Shrewſbury——State of Scotland——Parliamentary tranſactions——Death——and character of the King.

1399. Title of the King. THE Engliſh had ſo long been familiarized to the hereditary ſucceſſion of their monarchy, the inſtances of departure from it had always born ſuch ſtrong ſymptoms of injuſtice and violence, and ſo little of a national choice or election, and the returns to the true line had ever been deemed ſuch fortunate incidents in their hiſtory, that Henry was afraid, leſt, in reſting his title on the conſent of the people, he ſhould build on a foundation, to which the people themſelves were not accuſtomed, and whoſe ſolidity they would with difficulty be brought to recognize. The idea too of choice ſeemed always to imply that of conditions, and a liberty of recalling the conſent upon any ſuppoſed violation of them; an idea which was not naturally agreeable to a ſovereign, and might be dangerous to the people themſelves, who, lying ſo much under the influence of turbulent nobles, had ever paid but a very imperfect obedience even to their hereditary princes. For theſe reaſons Henry was determined never to have recourſe to this claim; the only one, on which his authority could conſiſtently ſtand: He choſe rather to patch up his title in the beſt manner he could from other pretenſions: And in the end, he left himſelf,

himſelf, in the eyes of men of ſenſe, no foundation of right, but his preſent poſſeſſion; a very precarious claim, which, by its very nature, was liable to be overthrown by every faction of the great, or prejudice of the people. He had indeed a preſent advantage over his competitor: The heir of the houſe of Mortimer, who had been declared in parliament the true heir of the crown, was a boy of ſeven years of age[a]: His friends conſulted his ſafety by keeping ſilence with regard to his title: Henry detained him and his younger brother in an honourable cuſtody at Windſor caſtle: But he had reaſon to dread, that, in proportion as that nobleman grew to man's eſtate, he would draw to him the attachment of the people, and make them reflect on the fraud, violence, and injuſtice, by which he had been excluded from the throne. Many favourable topics would occur in his behalf: He was born in the country; poſſeſſed an extenſive intereſt from the greatneſs and alliances of his family; however criminal the depoſed monarch might be, this youth was entirely innocent; he was of the ſame religion, and educated in the ſame manners with the people, and could not be governed by any ſeparate intereſt: Theſe views would all concur to favour his claim; and tho' the abilities of the preſent prince might ward off any dangerous revolution, it was juſtly to be apprehended, that his authority could with difficulty be brought to equal that of his predeceſſors. CHAP. XVIII. 1399.

HENRY in his very firſt parliament had reaſon to ſee the danger attending that ſtation, which he had aſſumed, and the obſtacles, which he would meet with, in governing an unruly ariſtocracy, always divided by faction, and ſtill more inflamed with the reſentments, conſequent on ſuch recent convulſions. The peers on their aſ-

[a] Dugdale, vol. i. p. 151.

CHAP. XVIII.

1399. sembling broke out into violent animosities; forty gauntlets, the gages of furious battle, were thrown on the floor of the house of lords by noblemen who gave mutual challenges to each other; and *liar* and *traitor* resounded from all quarters. The King had so much authority with these doughty champions, as to prevent all the combats, which they threatened; but he was not able to bring them to a proper composure, or to an amicable disposition towards each other.

1400. An insurrection.

It was not long before these passions broke out in action. The earls of Rutland, Kent, and Huntington and lord Spencer, who were now degraded from the titles of Albemarle, Surry, Exeter, and Gloucester, conferred on them by Richard, entered into a conspiracy, together with the earl of Salisbury and lord Lumley, for raising an insurrection, and for seizing the King's person at Windsor [b]; but the treachery of Rutland gave him warning of the danger. He suddenly withdrew to London; and the conspirators, who came to Windsor with a body of 500 horse, found that they had missed this blow, on which all the success of their enterprize depended. Henry appeared, next day, at Kingston upon Thames, at the head of 20,000 men, mostly drawn from the city; and his enemies, unable to resist his power, dispersed themselves, with a view of raising their followers in the several counties, which were the seat of their interest. But the adherents of the King were hot in the pursuit, and every where opposed themselves to their progress. The earls of Kent and Salisbury were seized at Cirencester by the citizens; and were next day beheaded without farther ceremony, according to the custom of the times [c]. The citizens of Bristol treated Spencer and

[b] Walsingham, p. 362. Otterbourne, p. 224.
[c] Walsingham, p. 363. Ypod. Neust. p. 556.

Lumley

Lumley in the ſame manner. The earl of Huntington, Sir Thomas Blount, Sir Benedict Sely, who were alſo taken priſoners, ſuffered death, with many others of the conſpirators, by orders from Henry. And when the quarters of theſe unhappy men were brought to London, no leſs than eighteen biſhops and thirty-four mitred abbots, joined the populace, and met them with the moſt indecent marks of joy and exultation. CHAP. XVIII. 1400.

But the ſpectacle the moſt ſhocking to every one, who retained any ſentiment either of honour or humanity, ſtill remained. The earl of Rutland appeared, carrying on a pole the head of lord Spencer, his brother-in-law, which he preſented in triumph to Henry, as a teſtimony of his loyalty. This infamous man, who was ſoon after duke of York by the death of his father, and firſt prince of the blood, had been inſtrumental in the murder of his uncle, the duke of Gloceſter [d]; had then deſerted Richard, by whom he was truſted; had conſpired againſt the life of Henry, to whom he had ſworn allegiance; had betrayed his aſſociates, whom he had ſeduced into this enterprize; and now diſplayed, in the face of the world, theſe badges of his multiplied diſhonour.

Henry was ſenſible, that, tho' the execution of theſe conſpirators might ſeem to give ſecurity to his throne, the animoſities, which remain after ſuch bloody ſcenes, are always dangerous to royal authority; and he therefore determined not to encreaſe, by any hazardous enterprize, thoſe numerous enemies, with whom he was every where ſurrounded. While he was only a ſubject, he was believed to have ſtrongly imbibed all the principles of his father, the duke of Lancaſter, and to have adopted the prejudices which the Lollards inſpired againſt the abuſes of the eſtabliſhed church: But finding himſelf poſſeſſed 1401.

[d] Dugdale, vol. ii. p. 171.

CHAP. XVIII. 1401.

of the throne by so precarious a title, he thought superstition a very necessary implement of public authority; and he resolved, by every expedient, to pay court to the clergy. There were hitherto no penal laws enacted against heresy; an indulgence which had nowise proceeded from a spirit of toleration in the Romish church, but from the ignorance and simplicity of the people, which had rendered them unfit either for starting or receiving any new or curious doctrines, and which needed not to be restrained by any rigorous punishments. But when the learning and genius of Wickliffe had once broke the fetters of prejudice, the ecclesiastics called aloud for the punishment of his disciples; and the King, who was very little scrupulous in his conduct, was easily induced to sacrifice his principles to his interest, and to acquire the favour of the church by that most effectual method, the gratifying their vengeance against all opponents. He engaged the parliament to pass a law for this purpose, and it was enacted, that when any heretic, who relapsed or refused to abjure his opinions, was delivered over to the secular arm by the bishop or his commissaries, he should be committed to the flames by the civil magistrate before the whole people [y]. This weapon did not remain long unemployed in the hands of the clergy: William Sautre, rector of St. Osithes in London, had been condemned by the convocation of Canterbury; his sentence was ratified by the house of peers; the King issued his writ for the execution [z]; and the unhappy man attoned for his erroneous opinions by the penalty of fire. This is the first instance of that kind in England; and thus one horror more was added to those dismal scenes, which at that time were already but too familiar to the people.

[y] 2 Henry IV. chap. vii. [z] Rymer, vol. viii. p. 178.

But

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1401.

But the utmoſt precaution and prudence of Henry could not ſhield him from thoſe numerous inquietudes, which aſſailed him from every quarter. The connexions of Richard with the royal family of France, made that court exert its activity to recover his authority, or revenge his death [a]; but tho' the confuſions of England, tempted the French to undertake ſome enterprize, by which they might diſtreſs their ancient enemy, the greater confuſions, which they experienced at home, obliged them quickly to accommodate matters; and Charles, content with recovering his daughter from Henry's hands, laid aſide his preparations, and renewed the truce between the two kingdoms [b]. The attack of Guienne was alſo an inviting attempt, which the preſent factions, that prevailed among the French, obliged them to neglect. The Gaſcons, affectionate to the memory of Richard, who had been born among them, refuſed to ſwear allegiance to a prince that had uſurped his throne, and murdered his perſon; and the appearance of a French army on their frontiers, would probably have tempted them to change maſters [c]. But the earl of Worceſter, arriving with ſome Engliſh troops, gave countenance to the partizans of England, and overawed their opponents. Religion too was here found a cement of their union with that kingdom. The Gaſcons had been engaged by Richard's authority to acknowledge the Pope of Rome; and they were ſenſible, that if they ſubmitted to France, it would be neceſſary for them to pay obedience to the Pope of Avignon, whom they had been taught to deteſt as a ſchiſmatic. Their principles on this head were too faſt rooted to admit of any ſudden or violent alteration.

Inſurrection in Wales.

The revolution in England proved likewiſe the occaſion of an inſurrection in Wales. Owen Glendour, or

[a] Rymer, vol. viii. p. 123. [b] Ibid. vol. viii. p. 142, 152. 219. [c] Ibid. vol. viii. p. 110, 111.

CHAP. XVIII. 1401.

Glendourduy, deſcended from the ancient princes of that country, had become obnoxious on account of his attachments to Richard; and Reginald, lord Gray of Ruthyn, who was cloſely connected with the new King, and who poſſeſſed a great fortune in the marches of Wales, thought the opportunity favourable for oppreſſing his neighbour, and taking poſſeſſion of his eſtate [d]. Glendour, provoked at the injuſtice, and ſtill more at the indignity, recovered poſſeſſion by the ſword [e]: Henry ſent aſſiſtance to Gray [f]; the Welſh took party with Glendour: A troubleſome and tedious war was kindled, which Glendour long ſuſtained by his valour and activity, aided by the natural ſtrength of that country, and the untamed ſpirit of its inhabitants.

As Glendour committed devaſtations promiſcuouſly on all the Engliſh, he infeſted the eſtate of the earl of Marche; and Sir Edmund Mortimer, uncle to that nobleman, led out the retainers of the family, and gave battle to the Welſh chieftain. His troops were routed, and he himſelf was taken priſoner [g]: At the ſame time, the earl himſelf, who had been allowed to retire to his caſtle of Wigmore, and who, tho' a mere boy, took the field with his followers, fell alſo into Glendour's hands, and was carried by him into Wales [h]. As Henry hated mortally all the family of Marche, he allowed the earl to remain in captivity; and tho' that young nobleman was nearly allied to the Piercies, to whoſe aſſiſtance he himſelf had owed his crown, he refuſed to the earl of Northumberland permiſſion to treat of his ranſom with Glendour.

THE uncertainty in which Henry's affairs ſtood for a long time with France, as well as the confuſion, in-

[d] Vita Ric. ſec. p. 171, 172.
[e] Walſing. p. 364.
[f] Vita Ric. ſec. 172, 173.
[g] Dugdale, vol. i. p. 150.
[h] Ibid. vol. i. p. 151.

cident

cident to all great changes in government, tempted the Scots to make incurſions into England; and Henry, deſirous of taking revenge upon them, but afraid of rendering his new government unpopular by requiring great ſupplies from his ſubjects, ſummoned at Weſtminſter a council of the peers, without the commons, and laid before them the ſtate of his affairs [1]. The military part of the feudal conſtitution was now entirely gone: There remained only ſo much of that fabric as affected the civil rights and properties of men: And the peers here undertook, but voluntarily, to attend the King in an expedition againſt Scotland, each of them at the head of a certain number of his retainers [k]. Henry conducted this army to Edinburgh, of which he eaſily took poſſeſſion; and he there ſummoned Robert III. to do homage to him for his crown [l]. But finding, that the Scots would neither ſubmit nor give him battle, he returned in three weeks, after making this uſeleſs bravade; and he diſperſed his army. CHAP. XVIII. 1401.

In the ſubſequent ſeaſon, Archibald earl of Douglas, at the head of 12,000 men, and attended by many of the principal nobility of Scotland, made an irruption into England, and committed devaſtations on the northern counties. On his return home, he was overtaken by the Piercies, at Homeldon on the borders of England, and a fierce battle enſued, where the Scots were totally routed. Douglas himſelf was taken priſoner; as was Mordac earl of Fife, ſon of the duke of Albany, and nephew of the Scots King, with the earls of Angus, Murray, and Orkney, and many others of the Scots gentry and nobility [m]. When Henry received intel- 1402.

[1] Rymer, vol. viii. p. 125, 126.
[l] Ibid. vol. viii. p. 125, 135, 136, &c.
[k] Ibid. vol. viii. p. 125.
[m] Walſingham, p. 366. Vita Ric. ſec. p. 180. Chron. Otterbourne, p. 237.

ligence

CHAP. XVIII. 1402.

ligence of this victory, he ſent the earl of Northumberland orders not to ranſom his priſoners, which that nobleman regarded as his right, by the laws of war, that prevailed in that age. The King intended to detain them, that he might be able by their means to make an advantageous peace with Scotland; but by this policy he gave a new cauſe of diſguſt to the family of Piercy.

1403. The earl of Northumberland rebels.

THE obligations, which Henry had owed to the earl of Northumberland, were of a kind the moſt likely to produce ingratitude on the one ſide, and diſcontent on the other. The prince naturally became jealous of that power, which had advanced him to the throne; and the ſubject was not eaſily ſatisfied in the returns, which he thought ſo great a favour had merited. Tho' Henry, on his acceſſion, had beſtowed the office of conſtable on Northumberland for life [n], and conferred other gifts on that family, theſe favours were regarded as their due; the refuſal of any other requeſt was deemed an injury. The impatient ſpirit of Harry Piercy, and the factious diſpoſition of the earl of Worceſter, younger brother of Northumberland, inflamed the diſcontents of that nobleman; and the precarious title of Henry tempted him to ſeek revenge, by overturning that throne, which he had at firſt eſtabliſhed. He entered into a correſpondence with Glendour: He gave liberty to the earl of Douglas, and made an alliance with that martial chieftain: He rouzed up all his partizans to arms; and ſuch unlimited authority at that time belonged to the great families, that the ſame men, whom, a few years before, he had conducted againſt Richard, now followed his ſtandard in oppoſition to Henry. When the war was ready to break out, Northumberland was ſeized with a ſudden illneſs at Berwic; and young Piercy taking the command

[n] Rymer, vol. viii. p. 89.

of

of the troops, marched towards Shrewſbury, in order to join his forces with thoſe of Glendour. The King had happily a ſmall army on foot, with which he had intended to act againſt the Scots; and knowing the importance of celerity in all civil wars, he inſtantly hurried down, that he might give battle to the rebels. He approached Piercy near Shrewſbury, before that nobleman was joined by Glendour; and the policy of the one leader, and impatience of the other, made them both haſten to a general engagement.

THE evening before the battle, Piercy ſent a manifeſto to Henry, in which he renounced his allegiance, ſet that prince at defiance, and in the name of his father and uncle, as well as his own, enumerated all the grievances of which the nation had reaſon to complain. He repreſented the perjury, of which Henry had been guilty, when, on landing at Ravenſpur, he had ſworn upon the goſpels, before the earl of Northumberland, that he had no other intention but to recover poſſeſſion of the dutchy of Lancaſter, and that he would ever remain a faithful ſubject to King Richard. He aggravated his guilt in firſt dethroning and then murdering that prince, and in uſurping on the title of the houſe of Mortimer, to whom, both by lineal ſucceſſion, and by declarations of parliament, the throne, when vacant by Richard's death, did of right belong. He complained of the cruel policy, in allowing the young earl of Marche, whom he ought to regard as his ſovereign, to remain a captive in the hands of his enemies, and in even refuſing to all his friends permiſſion to treat of his ranſom. He charged him again with perjury in loading the nation with heavy taxes, after having ſworn that, without the utmoſt neceſſity, he would never levy any impoſitions upon them. And he reproached him with the arts employed in procuring favourable elections into parliament; arts, which he himſelf

CHAP. XVIII. 1403.

self had before imputed to Richard, and which he had made one chief reason of that prince's arraignment and deposition [o]. This manifesto was very well calculated to inflame the quarrel between the parties: The bravery of the two leaders, promised an obstinate engagement: And the equality of the armies, being each about 12,000 men, a number which rendered them not unmanageable by the commanders, gave reason to expect a great effusion of blood on both sides, and a very doubtful issue to the combat.

21st July. Battle of Shrewsbury.

We shall scarcely find any battle in those ages, where the shock was more terrible and more constant. Henry exposed his person in the thickest of the fight: His gallant son, whose military feats became afterwards so famous, and who here performed his apprenticeship in arms, signalized himself on his father's footsteps, and even a wound, which he received on the face with an arrow, could not oblige him to quit the field [p]. Piercy supported that renown, which he had acquired in so many bloody combats. And Douglas, his antient enemy and now his friend, still appeared his rival, amidst the horror and confusion of the day. This nobleman performed feats of valour, which are almost incredible: He seemed determined that the King of England should fall that day by his arm: He sought him all over the field of battle: And as Henry, either to elude the attacks of the enemy upon his person, or to encourage his own men by the belief of his presence every where, had accoutered several captains in the royal garb, the sword of Douglas rendered this honour fatal to many [q]. But while the armies were contending in this furious manner, the death of Piercy, by an uncertain hand, decided the victory, and the royalists prevailed. There are said to have fallen that day on both

[o] Hall, fol. 21, 22, &c. [p] T. Livii, p. 3.

[q] Walsingham, p. 366, 367. Hall, fol. 22.

sides

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ſides near two thouſand three hundred gentlemen; but the perſons of greateſt diſtinction were on the King's; the earl of Stafford, Sir Hugh Shirley, Sir Nicholas Gauſel, Sir Hugh Mortimer, Sir John Maſſey, Sir John Calverley. About ſix thouſand private men periſhed, of whom two thirds were of Piercy's army [r]. The earls of Worceſter and Douglas were taken priſoners; The former was beheaded at Shrewſbury; the latter was treated with the courteſy, which was due to his rank and merit. 1403.

THE earl of Northumberland, having recovered his health, had levyed an army, and was on his march to join his ſon; but being oppoſed by the earl of Weſtmoreland, and hearing of the event of the battle at Shrewſbury, he diſmiſſed his forces, and came with a ſmall retinue to the King at York [s]. He pretended, that his ſole intention in arming was to mediate between the two parties: Henry thought proper to accept the apology, and even granted him a pardon for his offence: All the other rebels were treated with equal lenity; and except the earl of Worceſter and Sir Richard Vernon, who were regarded as the chief authors of the inſurrection, no perſon, engaged in this dangerous deſign, ſeems to have periſhed by the hands of the executioner [t].

BUT Northumberland, tho' he had been pardoned, knew, that he never ſhould be truſted, and that he was too powerful to be cordially forgiven by a prince, whoſe ſituation gave him ſuch reaſonable grounds of jealouſy. It was the effect either of Henry's vigilance or good fortune, or of the narrow genius of his enemies, that no proper concert was ever formed among them: They roſe in rebellion one after another; and thereby afforded him 1405.

[r] Chron. Otterbourne, p. 224. Ypod Neuſt. p. 560.
[s] Chron. Otterbourne, p. 225. [t] Rymer, vol. viii. p. 353.

CHAP. XVIII. 1405.

an opportunity of ſuppreſſing ſingly thoſe inſurrections, which, had they been united, might have proved fatal to his authority. The earl of Nottingham, ſon to the duke of Norfolk, and the archbiſhop of York, brother to the earl of Wiltſhire, whom Henry, then duke of Lancaſter, had beheaded at Briſtol, tho' they had remained quiet, while Piercy was in the field, ſtill harboured in their breaſt a violent hatred againſt the enemy of their families; and they determined, in conjunction with the earl of Northumberland, to ſeek revenge againſt him. They betook themſelves to arms before that powerful nobleman was prepared to join them; and publiſhing a manifeſto, in which they reproached Henry with his uſurpation of the crown and the murder of the late King, they required, that the right line ſhould be reſtored, and all public grievances be redreſſed. The earl of Weſtmoreland, whoſe power lay in the neighbourhood, approached them with an inferior force at Shipton near York; and being afraid to hazard a battle, he attempted to ſubdue them by a ſtratagem, which nothing but the greateſt folly and ſimplicity on their part could have rendered ſucceſsful. He deſired a conference with the archbiſhop and earl between the two armies: He heard their grievances with great patience: He begged them to propoſe the remedies: He approved of every thing which they ſuggeſted: He granted them all their demands: He alſo engaged that Henry ſhould give them entire ſatisfaction: And when he ſaw them pleaſed with the facility of his conceſſions, he obſerved to them, that, ſince amity was now in effect reſtored between them, it were better on both ſides to diſmiſs their forces, which otherwiſe would prove an inſupportable burthen to the country. The archbiſhop and the earl of Nottingham immediately iſſued orders to that purpoſe: Their troops diſbanded upon the field: But Weſtmoreland, who had ſecretly

issued contrary orders to *his* army, seized the two rebels without resistance, and carried them to the King, who was advancing with hasty marches to suppress the rebellion [u]. The trial and punishment of an archbishop might have proved a very troublesome and dangerous undertaking, had Henry proceeded regularly, and allowed time for an opposition to form itself against that unusual measure. The celerity of the execution alone could here render it safe and prudent. Finding that Sir William Gascoigne, the chief justice, made some scruple of acting on this occasion, he appointed Sir William Fulthorpe a judge for that purpose; who, without any indictment, trial or defence, pronounced sentence of death upon the prelate, which was instantly executed. This was the first instance in England of a capital punishment inflicted on a bishop; whence the clergy of that rank might learn, that their crimes, as well as those of laics, were not to pass with impunity. The earl of Nottingham was condemned and executed in the same summary manner: But tho' many other persons of condition, such as the lord Falconberge, Sir Ralph Hastings, Sir John Colville, were engaged in this rebellion, no more seem to have fallen victims to Henry's severity.

CHAP. XVIII. 1405.

The earl of Northumberland, on receiving this intelligence, fled into Scotland, together with lord Bardolf [x]; and the King, without opposition, reduced all the castles and fortresses, belonging to these noblemen. He thence turned his arms against Glendour, over whom his son, the prince of Wales, had obtained some advantages: But that enemy, more troublesome than dangerous, still found means of defending himself in his fastnesses, and of eluding, tho' not resisting, all the force of England. In a subsequent season, the earl of Northumberland and 1407.

[u] Walsingham, p. 373. Otterbourne, p. 255.

[x] Walsingham, p. 374.

lord

CHAP. XVIII. 1407.

lord Bardolf, impatient of their exile, entered the north, in hopes of raiſing the people to arms; but found the country in ſuch a poſture as rendered all their attempts unſucceſsful. Sir Thomas Rokeſby, ſheriff of Yorkſhire, levied ſome forces, attacked the invaders at Bramham, and gained a victory, in which both Northumberland and Bardolf were ſlain [b]. This proſperous event, joined to the death of Glendour, which happened ſoon after, freed Henry from all his domeſtic enemies; and this prince, who had mounted the throne by ſuch unjuſtifiable methods, and held it by ſuch an exceptionable title, had yet, by his valour, prudence, and addreſs, accuſtomed his people to the yoke, and had obtained a greater aſcendant over his haughty barons, than the law alone, not ſupported by theſe active qualities, was ever able to confer.

ABOUT the ſame time, fortune gave Henry an advantage over that neighbour, who, by his ſituation, was beſt enabled to diſturb his government. Robert the Third, King of Scots, was a prince, tho' of ſlender capacity, extremely innocent and inoffenſive in his conduct: But Scotland, at that time, was ſtill leſs fitted than England for cheriſhing, or even enduring, ſovereigns of that character. The duke of Albany, Robert's brother, a prince of more abilities, at leaſt of a more boiſterous and violent diſpoſition, had aſſumed the government of the ſtate; and not ſatisfied with preſent authority, he entertained the criminal purpoſe of extirpating his brother's children, and of acquiring the crown to his own family. He threw in priſon David, his eldeſt nephew; who there periſhed with hunger: James alone, the younger brother of David, ſtood between that tyrant and the throne; and King Robert, ſenſible of his ſon's danger, embarked him on

[b] Walſingham, p. 377. Chron. Otterb. p. 261.

board

board a ſhip, with a view of ſending him into France, and entruſting him to the protection of that friendly power. Unfortunately, the veſſel was taken by the Engliſh; prince James, a boy about nine years of age, was carried to London; and tho' there ſubſiſted a truce at that time between the two kingdoms, Henry conſtantly refuſed to reſtore the young prince to his liberty. Robert, worn out with cares and infirmities, was unable to bear the ſhock of this laſt misfortune; and he ſoon after died, leaving the government in the hands of the duke of Albany [c]. Henry was now more ſenſible than ever of the importance of the acquiſition, which he had made: While he retained ſuch a pledge in his hands, he was ſure of keeping the duke of Albany in dependance; or if offended, he could eaſily, by reſtoring the true heir, take ample revenge upon the uſurper. But tho' the King, by detaining James in the Engliſh court, had ſhown himſelf ſomewhat deficient in generoſity, he made ample amends by giving that prince an excellent education, which afterwards qualified him, when he mounted the throne, to reform, in ſome meaſure, the rude and barbarous manners of his native country.

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THE hoſtile diſpoſitions, which always prevailed between France and England, were reſtrained, during the greateſt part of this reign, from appearing in action. The jealouſies and civil commotions, with which both nations were diſturbed, kept each of them from taking advantage of the unhappy ſituation of its neighbour. But as the abilities and good fortune of Henry had been able ſooner to compoſe the Engliſh factions, this prince began, in the latter part of his reign, to look abroad, and to foment the animoſities between the families of Burgundy and Orleans, by which the government of France

[c] Buchanan, lib. 10.

CHAP. XVIII.

was, during that period, ſo much diſtracted. He knew, that one great ſource of the national diſcontent againſt his predeceſſor, was the inactivity of his reign; and he hoped, by giving a new direction to the reſtleſs and unquiet ſpirits of his people, to prevent their breaking out in domeſtic wars and diſorders. That he might join policy to force, he firſt entered into treaty with the duke of Burgundy, and ſent that prince a ſmall body of troops, which ſupported him againſt his enemies [c]. Soon after, he hearkened to more advantageous propoſals made him by the duke of Orleans, and diſpatched a greater body to ſupport that party [d]. But the leaders of the oppoſite factions having made a temporary accommodation of their differences, the intereſts of the Engliſh were ſacrificed; and this effort of Henry proved, in the iſſue, entirely vain and fruitleſs. The declining ſtate of his health and the ſhortneſs of his reign, prevented him from renewing the attempt, which his more fortunate ſon carried to ſo great a length againſt the French monarchy.

1407. 1411. 1412.

Parliamentary tranſactions.

SUCH were the military and foreign tranſactions of this reign: The civil and parliamentary are ſomewhat more memorable; and more worthy of our attention. During the two laſt reigns, the elections of the commons had appeared a circumſtance of government not to be neglected; and Richard was even accuſed of uſing unwarrantable methods for procuring to his partizans a ſeat in that houſe. This practice formed one conſiderable article of charge againſt him in his depoſition; yet Henry ſcrupled not to tread in his footſteps, and to encourage the ſame abuſes in elections. Laws were enacted againſt ſuch undue influence, and even a ſheriff was puniſhed for an iniquitous return, which he had made [e]: But laws commonly were, at that time, very

[c] Walſingham, p. 380. Rymer, vol. viii. p. 715. 738.
[d] Cotton, p. 429.

ill executed; and the liberties of the people, such as they were, stood on a surer basis than on laws and parliamentary elections. Tho' the house of commons was little able to withstand the violent currents, which perpetually ran between the monarchy and the aristocracy, and that house might easily be brought, at a particular time, to make the most unwarrantable concessions to either; the general institutions of the state still remained invariable; the interests of the several members continued on the same footing; the sword was in the hands of the subject; and the government, tho' thrown into temporary disorders, soon settled itself on its antient foundations. CHAP. XVIII. 1412.

During the greatest part of this reign, the King was obliged to court popularity; and the house of commons, sensible of their own importance, began to assume powers, which had not usually been exercised by their predecessors. In the first session of this reign, they procured a law, that no judge, in concurring with any iniquitous measure, should be excused by pleading the orders of the King, or even the danger of his own life from the menaces of the sovereign [f]. In the second year of Henry, they insisted on maintaining the practice of not granting any supply before they received an answer to their petitions; which was a tacit method of bargaining with the prince [g]. In the fifth year, they desired the King to remove from his household four officers who had displeased them, among whom was his own confessor; and Henry, though he told them, that he knew of no offence, which these persons had committed, yet, in order to gratify them, complied with their request [h]. In the sixth year, they voted the King supplies, but appointed treasurers of their own, to see the money disbursed for the purposes intended, and required

[f] Cotton, p. 364. [g] Ibid. p. 406. [h] Ibid. p. 426.

CHAP. XVIII. 1412.

them to deliver in their accounts to the houſe [i]. In the eighth year, they propoſed thirty very important articles for the regulation of the government and houſehold, which were all granted them; and they even obliged all the members of council, all the judges, and all the officers of the houſehold, to ſwear to the obſervance of them [k]. The abridger of the records obſerves the unuſual liberties taken by the ſpeaker and the houſe during this period [l]. But the great authority of the commons was but a temporary advantage ariſing from the preſent ſituation. In a ſubſequent parliament, when the ſpeaker made his cuſtomary applications to the throne for liberty of ſpeech, the King, having now overcome all his domeſtic difficulties, plainly told him, that he would have no novelties introduced, and would enjoy his prerogatives. But on the whole, the limitations of the government ſeem to have been more ſenſibly felt, and more carefully maintained by Henry than by any of his predeceſſors.

DURING this reign, when the houſe of commons were, at any time, brought to make unwary conceſſions to the crown, they alſo ſhowed their freedom by a very ſpeedy retractation of them. Henry, tho' he entertained a perpetual and well-grounded jealouſy of the family of Mortimer, allowed not their name to be once mentioned in parliament; and as none of the rebels had ventured to declare the earl of Marche king, he never attempted to procure, what would not have been refuſed him, an expreſs declaration againſt the claim of that nobleman; becauſe he knew that ſuch a declaration, in the preſent circumſtances, would have no authority, and would only ſerve to revive the memory of Mortimer's title in the minds of the people. He proceeded in his purpoſe after a more artful and covert manner. He pro-

[i] Cotton, p. 438. [k] Ibid. p. 456, 457. [l] Ibid. p. 462.

cured

cured a ſettlement of the crown on himſelf and his heirs-male [m], thereby tacitly excluding the females, and tranſferring the Salic law to the Engliſh government. He thought, that, tho' the houſe of Plantagenet had at firſt derived their title from females, this was a remote event, unknown to the generality of the people; and if he could once accuſtom the nation to the practice of excluding women, the title of the earl of Marche would gradually be forgot and neglected by them. But he was very unfortunate in this attempt. During the long conteſts with France, the injuſtice of the Salic law had been ſo much exclaimed againſt by the nation, that a contrary principle had taken deep root in the minds of men, and it was now become impoſſible to eradicate it. The ſame houſe of commons, therefore, in a ſubſequent ſeſſion, apprehenſive that they had overturned the foundations of the Engliſh government, and that they had opened the door to more civil wars than might enſue even from the irregular advancement of the houſe of Lancaſter, applied with ſuch earneſtneſs for a new ſettlement of the crown, that Henry yielded to their requeſt, and agreed to the ſucceſſion of the princeſſes of his family [n]. A certain proof, that no-body was, in his heart, ſatisfied with the King's title to the crown, or knew on what principle to reſt it.

CHAP. XVIII. 1412.

But tho' the commons, during this reign, ſhowed a very laudable zeal for liberty in their tranſactions with the crown; their efforts againſt the church were ſtill more extraordinary, and ſeemed to anticipate very much on the ſpirit which became ſo general in little more than a century afterwards. I know, that the credit of theſe paſſages reſts entirely on one antient hiſtorian [o]; but

[m] Cotton, p. 454.
[n] Rymer, vol. viii. p. 462.
[o] Walſingham.

CHAP. XVIII. 1412.

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DURING this reign, when the house of commons were, at any time, brought to make unwary concessions to the crown, they also showed their freedom by a very speedy retractation of them. Henry, tho' he entertained a perpetual and well-grounded jealousy of the family of Mortimer, allowed not their name to be once mentioned in parliament; and as none of the rebels had ventured to declare the earl of Marche king, he never attempted to procure, what would not have been refused him, an express declaration against the claim of that nobleman; because he knew that such a declaration, in the present circumstances, would have no authority, and would only serve to revive the memory of Mortimer's title in the minds of the people. He proceeded in his purpose after a more artful and covert manner. He pro-

[i] Cotton, p. 438. [k] Ibid. p. 456, 457. [l] Ibid. p. 462.

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[m] Cotton, p. 454.
[n] Rymer, vol. viii. p. 462.
[o] Walſingham.

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that hiſtorian was contemporary, was a churchman, and it was contrary to the intereſts of his order to preſerve the memory of ſuch tranſactions, much more to forge precedents, which poſterity might, ſome time, be tempted to imitate. This is a truth ſo evident, that the moſt likely way of accounting for the ſilence of the records on this head, is by ſuppoſing, that the authority of ſome churchmen was ſo great as to procure a razure, with regard to theſe circumſtances, which the indiſcretion of one of that order has happily preſerved to us.

In the ſixth of Henry, the commons, who had been required to grant ſupplies, propoſed in plain terms to the King, that he ſhould ſeize all the temporalities of the church, and employ them as a perpetual fund to ſerve the exigences of the ſtate. They inſiſted, that the clergy poſſeſſed a third of the lands of the kingdom; that they contributed nothing to the ſupport of the public burdens; and that their exorbitant riches tended only to diſqualify them for performing their miniſterial functions with proper zeal and attention. When this addreſs was preſented, the archbiſhop of Canterbury, who then attended the King, objected, that the clergy, tho' they went not in perſon to the wars, ſent their vaſſals and tenants in all caſes of neceſſity; while at the ſame time, they themſelves, who ſtaid at home, were employed, night and day, in offering up their prayers for the happineſs and proſperity of the ſtate. The ſpeaker ſmiled, and replied without reſerve, that he thought the prayers of the church but a very ſlender ſupply. The archbiſhop, however, prevailed in the diſpute: The King diſcouraged the application of the commons: And the lords rejected the bill which the lower houſe had framed for deſpoiling the church of her revenues [p].

[p] Walſingham, p. 371. Ypod Neuſt. p. 563.

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THE commons were not diſcouraged by this repulſe: In the eleventh of the King they returned to the charge with more zeal than before: They made a calculation of all the eccleſiaſtical revenues, which, by their account, amounted to 485,000 marks a year, and included 18,400 ploughs of land. They propoſed to divide this riches among fifteen new earls, 1500 knights, 6000 eſquires, and a hundred hoſpitals; beſides 20,000 pounds a-year which the King might take for his own uſe: And they inſiſted, that the clerical functions would be better performed than at preſent, by 15,000 pariſh prieſts, at the rate of ſeven marks apiece of yearly ſtipend [q]. This application was accompanied with an addreſs for mitigating the ſtatutes enacted againſt the Lollards, which ſhows from what ſource the addreſs came. The King gave the commons a ſevere reply, and farther to ſatisfy the church, and to prove that he was quite in earneſt, he ordered a Lollard to be burned before the diſſolution of the parliament [r]. CHAP. XVIII. 1412.

WE have now related almoſt all the memorable tranſactions of this reign, which was buſy and active; but produced few events, that deſerve to be tranſmitted to poſterity. The King was ſo much employed in defending his crown, which he had obtained by ſuch unwarrantable means, and poſſeſſed by ſo bad a title, that he had little leiſure to look abroad, or perform any actions, which might redound to the honour or advantage of the nation. His health declined viſibly ſome months before his death: He was ſubject to fits, which bereaved him, for the time, of his ſenſes: And tho' he was yet in the flower of his age, his end was viſibly approaching. 1413.

[q] Walſingham, p. 379. Tit. Livius.
[r] Rymer, vol. viii. p. 627. Otterbourne, p. 267.

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He expired at Weſtminſter in the forty-ſixth year of his age, and the thirteenth of his reign.

1413. 20th March. Death and character of the King.

THE great popularity, which Henry enjoyed before he attained the crown, and which had ſo much aided him in the acquiſition of it, was entirely loſt many years before the end of his reign; and he governed his people more by terror than by affection, more by his own policy than by their ſenſe of duty or allegiance. When men came to reflect in cold blood on the crimes which had led him to the throne; the rebellion againſt his prince; the depoſition of a lawful King guilty ſometimes perhaps of oppreſſion, but more frequently of imprudences; the excluſion of the true heir; the murder of his ſovereign and near relation; theſe were ſuch enormities as drew on him the hatred of his ſubjects, ſanctified all the rebellions againſt him, and made the executions, tho' not remarkably ſevere, which he found neceſſary for the maintenance of his authority, appear cruel as well as iniquitous to the people. Yet without pretending to apologize for theſe crimes, which muſt ever be held in deteſtation, it may be remarked, that he was inſenſibly led into this blameable conduct by a train of incidents, which few men poſſeſs virtue enough to withſtand. The injuſtice with which his predeceſſor had treated him, in firſt condemning him to baniſhment, and then deſpoiling him of his patrimony, made him naturally think of revenge, and of recovering his loſt rights; the headlong zeal of the people hurried him into the throne; the care of his own ſecurity, as well as his ambition, made him an uſurper; and the ſteps have always been ſo few between the priſons of princes and their graves, that we need not wonder if Richard's fate was no exception to the general rule. All theſe conſiderations make Henry's ſituation, if he retained any ſenſe of virtue, very much to be lamented; and the inquietude with which he poſſeſſed his envied greatneſs,

and

and the remorſes, by which it is ſaid he was continually haunted, render him an object of our pity, even when ſeated upon the throne. But it muſt be owned, that his prudence and vigilance and foreſight, in maintaining his power, were admirable: His command of temper remarkable: His courage, both military and political, without blemiſh: And he poſſeſſed many qualities, which fitted him for his high ſtation, and which rendered his uſurpation of it, tho' pernicious in after times, rather ſalutary, during his own reign, to the Engliſh nation. CHAP. XVIII. 1413.

HENRY was twice married: By his firſt wife, Mary de Bohun, daughter and co-heir of the earl of Hereford, he had four ſons, Henry, his ſucceſſor in the throne, Thomas duke of Clarence, John duke of Bedford, and Humphrey duke of Gloceſter; and two daughters, Blanche and Philippa, the former married to the duke of Bavaria, the latter to the King of Denmark. His ſecond wife, Jane, whom he married after he was King, and who was daughter to the King of Navarre, and widow of the duke of Brittany, brought him no iſſue.

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CHAP. XIX.

HENRY V.

The King's former diſorders——His reformation——The Lollards——Puniſhment of lord Cobham——State of France——Invaſion of that kingdom——Battle of Azincour——State of France——New invaſion of France——Aſſaſſination of the duke of Burgundy——Treaty of Troye——Marriage of the King——His death——And character——Miſcellaneous tranſactions during this reign.

CHAP. XIX.

1413. The King's former diſorders.

THE many jealouſies, to which Henry IV's ſituation naturally expoſed him, had ſo infected his temper, that he had been perſuaded to entertain unreaſonable ſuſpicions with regard to the fidelity of his eldeſt ſon; and during the latter years of his life, he had excluded that prince from all ſhare in public buſineſs, and was even diſpleaſed to ſee him at the head of armies, where his martial talents, tho' uſeful to the ſupport of government, acquired him a renown, which, he thought, might prove dangerous to his own authority. The active ſpirit of young Henry, reſtrained from its proper exerciſe, broke out in extravagancies of every kind; and the riot of pleaſure, the frolics of debauchery, the outrage of wine, filled the vacancies of a mind, better adapted to the purſuits of ambition, and the cares of government. This courſe of life threw him among companions, whoſe diſorders, if accompanied with ſpirit and humour, he ſeconded and indulged; and he was detected in many ſallies, which, to ſeverer eyes, appeared totally unworthy of

of his rank and ſtation. There even remains a tradition, that, when heated with liquor and jollity, he ſcrupled not to accompany them in attacking the paſſengers on the ſtreets and high-ways, and deſpoiling them of their goods; and he found an amuſement in the incidents, which the terror and regret of theſe defenceleſs people produced on ſuch occaſions. This extreme of diſſoluteneſs proved equally diſagreeable to his father, as that eager application to buſineſs, which had at firſt given him occaſion of jealouſy; and he ſaw in his ſon's behaviour the ſame neglect of decency, the ſame attachment to low company, which had deſtroyed the perſonal character of Richard, and which, more than all his errors in government, had tended to overturn his throne. But the nation in general conſidered the young prince with more indulgence; and obſerved ſo many gleams of generoſity, ſpirit, and magnanimity, breaking continually thro' the cloud, which a wild conduct threw over his character, that they never ceaſed hoping for his amendment, and aſcribed all the weeds, which ſhot up in that rich ſoil, to the want of proper culture and attention in the King and his miniſters. There paſſed an event which encouraged theſe agreeable views, and gave much occaſion for favourable reflexions to all men of ſenſe and candour. A riotous companion of the prince's had been indicted before Gaſcoigne, the chief juſtice, for ſome diſorders; and Henry was not aſhamed to appear at the bar with the criminal, in order to give him countenance and protection. Finding, that his preſence had not overawed the chief juſtice, he proceeded to inſult that magiſtrate on his tribunal; but Gaſcoigne, mindful of the character which he then bore, and the majeſty of the ſovereign and of the laws, which he ſuſtained, ordered the prince to be carried to priſon for his rude behaviour [a].

CHAP. XIX. 1413.

[a] Hall, fol. 33.

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The ſpectators were agreeably diſappointed, when they ſaw the heir of the crown ſubmit peaceably to this ſentence, make reparation for his error by acknowledging it, and check his impetuous nature in the midſt of its extravagant career.

His reformation.

THE memory of this incident, and of many others of a like nature, rendered the proſpect of the future reign nowiſe diſagreeable to the nation, and encreaſed the joy, which the death of ſo unpopular a prince as his father, naturally occaſioned. The firſt ſteps taken by the young King confirmed all thoſe prepoſſeſſions, entertained in his favour [b]. He called together his former companions, acquainted them with his intended reformation, exhorted them to imitate his example, but ſtrictly inhibited them, till they had given proofs of their ſincerity in this particular, to appear any more in his preſence; and he thus diſmiſſed them with liberal preſents [c]. The wiſe miniſters of his father, who had checked his riots, found that they had unknowingly been paying the higheſt court to him; and were received with all the marks of favour and confidence. The chief juſtice himſelf, who trembled to approach the royal preſence, met with praiſes, inſtead of reproaches, for his paſt conduct, and was exhorted to perſevere in the ſame rigorous and impartial execution of the laws. The ſurprize of thoſe, who expected an oppoſite behaviour, augmented their ſatisfaction; and the character of the young King appeared brighter than if it had never been ſhaded by any errors.

BUT Henry was anxious not only to repair his own miſconduct, but alſo to make amends for thoſe iniquities, into which policy or the neceſſity of affairs had betrayed his father. He expreſſed the deepeſt ſorrow for

[b] Walſing. p. 382. [c] Hall, fol. 33. Hollingſhed, p. 543. Goodwin's Life of Henry V. p. 1.

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the fate of the unhappy Richard, did juſtice to the memory of that unfortunate prince, even performed anew his funeral obſequies with pomp and ſolemnity, and cheriſhed all thoſe who had diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their loyalty and attachment towards him [d]. Inſtead of continuing the reſtraints which the jealouſy of his father had impoſed on the earl of Marche, he received that young nobleman with ſingular courteſy and favour; and by this magnanimity ſo gained on the gentle and unambitious nature of his rival, that he remained ever after ſincerely attached to him, and gave him no diſturbance in his future government. The family of Piercy was reſtored to its fortune and honours [e]. The King ſeemed ambitious to bury all party diſtinctions in oblivion: The inſtruments of the preceding reign, who had been advanced from their blind zeal for the Lancaſtrian intereſt, more than from their merits, gave place every where to men of more honourable characters: Virtue ſeemed now to have an open career, in which it might exert itſelf: The exhortations, as well as example, of the prince gave it encouragement: All men were unanimous in their attachment to Henry; and the defects of his title were forgot, amidſt the perſonal regard, which was univerſally paid to him.

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THERE remained among the people only one party diſtinction, which was derived from religious differences, and which, as it is of a peculiar and commonly a very obſtinate nature, the popularity of Henry was not able to overcome. The Lollards were every day encreaſing in the kingdom, and were become a formed party, which appeared extremely dangerous to the church, and even formidable to the civil authority [f]. The enthuſiaſm by

The Lollards.

[d] Hiſt. Croyland. contin. Hall, fol. 34. Holingſhed, p. 544.
[e] Holingſhed, p. 545. [f] Walſingham, p. 382.

which

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which these sectaries were generally actuated, the great alterations which they pretended to introduce, the hatred which they expressed against the established hierarchy, gave an alarm to Henry, who, either from a sincere attachment to the antient religion, or from the dread of the unknown consequences, which attend all important changes, was determined to execute the laws against such bold innovators. The head of this sect was Sir John Oldcastle, lord Cobham, a nobleman, who had distinguished himself by his valour and his military talents, and had, on many occasions, acquired the esteem both of the late and of the present King [g]. His high character and his zeal for the new sect pointed him out to Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, as the proper victim of ecclesiastical severity; whose punishment would strike a terror into the whole party, and teach them that they must expect no mercy under the present administration. He applied to Henry for a permission to indict lord Cobham [h]; but the generous nature of that prince was averse to such sanguinary methods of conversion. He represented to the primate, that reason and conviction were the best expedients for supporting truth; that every gentle means ought first to be tried, in order to reclaim men from error; and that he himself would endeavour, by a conversation with Cobham, to reconcile him to the Catholic faith. But he found that nobleman obstinate in his opinions, and determined not to sacrifice truths of such infinite moment to his complaisance for sovereigns [i]. Henry's principles of toleration, or rather his love of the practice, could carry him no farther; and he then gave full reins to ecclesiastical severity against this inflexible heresiarch. The primate indicted Cobham; and with the assistance of his three suffragans, the bishops of London,

[g] Walsingham, p. 382. [h] Fox's Acts and Monuments, p. 513.
[i] Rymer, vol. ix. p. 61. Walsingham, p. 383.

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Wincheſter, and St. David's, condemned him to the flames for his erroneous opinions. Cobham, who was confined to the Tower, made his eſcape before the day of his execution. The bold ſpirit of this man, provoked by perſecution and ſtimulated by zeal, was urged to attempt the moſt criminal enterprizes; and his unlimited authority over the ſect proved, that he well merited the attention of the civil magiſtrate. He formed in his retreat very violent deſigns againſt his enemies; and diſpatching his emiſſaries to all quarters, appointed a general rendezvous of the party, in order to ſeize the perſon of the King at Eltham, and put their perſecutors to the ſword [k]. Henry, apprized of their intention, removed to Weſtminſter: Cobham was not diſcouraged by this diſappointment; but changed the place of rendezvous to the fields near St. Giles: The King, having ſhut the gates of the city, to prevent any re-inforcement to the Lollards from that quarter, came into the fields in the night-time, ſeized ſuch of the conſpirators as appeared, and afterwards laid hold of the ſeveral parties, who were haſtening to the place appointed. It appeared, that few were in the ſecret of the conſpiracy: The reſt implicitly followed their leaders: But upon the trial of the priſoners, the treaſonable deſigns of the ſect were rendered certain, both from evidence and from the confeſſion of the criminals themſelves [l]. Some were executed; the greater number pardoned [m]. Cobham himſelf, who made his eſcape by flight, was not brought to juſtice, till four years after; when he was hanged as a traitor; and his body was burnt on the gibbet, in execution of the ſentence pronounced againſt him as a heretic [n]. This criminal

1413.

1414. 6 January.

Puniſhment of lord Cobham.

[k] Walſingham, p. 385.

[l] Cotton, p. 554. Hall, fol. 35. Holingſhed, p. 544.

[m] Rymer, vol. ix. p. 119. 129. 193.

[n] Walſingham, p. 400. Otterbourne, p. 280. Holingſhed, p. 561.

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minal deſign, which was perhaps ſomewhat aggravated by the clergy, brought diſcredit upon the party, and checked the progreſs of that ſect, which had embraced the ſpeculative doctrines of Wickliffe, and at the ſame time aſpired to a reformation of eccleſiaſtical abuſes.

THESE two points were the great objects of the Lollards; but the generality of the nation was not affected in the ſame degree by both of them. Common ſenſe and obvious reflection had diſcovered to the people the advantages of a reformation in diſcipline; but the age was not yet ſo far advanced as to be ſeized with the ſpirit of controverſy, or to enter into thoſe abſtruſe doctrines, which the Lollards endeavoured to propagate throughout the kingdom. The very notion of hereſy alarmed the generality of the people: Innovation in fundamental principles was ſuſpicious: Curioſity was not, as yet, a proper counter-balance to authority: And even many, who were the greateſt friends to the reformation of abuſes, were anxious to expreſs their deteſtation of the ſpeculative tenets of the Wicliffites, which, they feared, threw diſgrace on ſo good a cauſe. This turn of thought appears evidently in the proceedings of the parliament, which was ſummoned immediately after the detection of Cobham's conſpiracy. That aſſembly paſſed ſevere laws againſt the new heretics: They enacted, that whoever was convicted of Lollardy before the Ordinary, beſides ſuffering capital puniſhment according to the laws formerly eſtabliſhed, ſhould alſo forfeit his lands and goods to the King; and that the chancellor, treaſurer, juſtices of the two benches, ſheriffs, juſtices of peace, and all the chief magiſtrates in every city and borough, ſhould take an oath to uſe their utmoſt endeavours for the extirpation of hereſy [o]. Yet this very parliament, when

[o] 2 Hen. V. chap. 7.

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the King demanded ſupply, renewed the offer formerly preſſed upon his father, and entreated him to ſeize all the eccleſiaſtical revenues, and convert them to the uſe of the crown [p]. The clergy were alarmed: They could offer the King no bribe which was equivalent: They only agreed to confer on him all the priories alien, which depended on capital abbies in Normandy, and had been bequeathed them when that province remained united to England: And Chicheley, now archbiſhop of Canterbury, endeavoured to divert the blow, by giving occupation to the King, and by perſuading him to undertake a war againſt France, in order to recover his loſt rights to that kingdom [q]. CHAP. XIX. 1414.

It was the dying injunction of the late King to his ſon, not to allow the Engliſh to remain long in peace, which was apt to breed inteſtine commotions; but to employ them in foreign expeditions, by which the prince might acquire honour; the nobility, in ſharing his dangers, might attach themſelves to his perſon; and all the reſtleſs ſpirits find occupation for their inquietude. The natural diſpoſition of Henry ſufficiently inclined him to follow this advice, and the civil diſorders of France, which had been lengthened out beyond thoſe of England, opened a full career to his ambition.

The death of Charles V. which followed ſo ſoon after that of Edward III. and the youth of his ſon, Charles VI. put the two kingdoms for ſome time in a ſimilar ſituation; and it was not to be apprehended, that either of them, during a minority, would be able to make much advantage of the weakneſs of the other. The jealouſies alſo between Charles's three uncles, the dukes of Anjou, Berri, and Burgundy, had diſtracted the affairs of France rather more than thoſe between the dukes of Lancaſter, York, and Gloceſter, Richard's three uncles, diſordered 1415. State of France.

[p] Hall, fol. 35. [q] Ibid. fol. 35, 36.

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thoſe of England; and had carried off the attention of the French nation from any vigorous enterprize againſt foreigners. But in proportion as Charles advanced in years, the factions were compoſed; his two uncles, the dukes of Anjou and Burgundy, died; and the King himſelf, aſſuming the government, gave ſymptoms of genius and ſpirit, which revived the drooping hopes of his country. This promiſing ſtate of affairs was not of long continuance: The unhappy prince fell ſuddenly into a fit of frenzy, which rendered him incapable of exerciſing his authority; and tho' he recovered from this diſorder, he was ſo ſubject to relapſes, that his judgment was gradually, but ſenſibly impaired, and no ſteady plan of government could be purſued by him. The adminiſtration of affairs was diſputed between his brother, Lewis, duke of Orleans, and his couſin german, John duke of Burgundy: The propinquity to the crown pleaded in favour of the former: The latter, who, in right of his mother, had inherited the county of Flanders, which he annexed to his father's extenſive dominions, derived a luſtre from his ſuperior power: The people were divided between theſe contending princes: And the King, now reſuming and now dropping his authority, kept the victory undecided, and prevented any regular ſettlement of the ſtate, by the final prevalence of either party.

At length, the dukes of Orleans and Burgundy, ſeeming to be moved by the cries of the nation and by the interpoſition of common friends, agreed to bury all paſt quarrels in oblivion, and to enter into ſtrict amity together: They ſwore before the altar to the ſincerity of this friendſhip; the prieſt adminiſtered the ſacrament to both of them; they gave to each other every pledge, which could be deemed ſacred among men: But all this ſolemn preparation was only a cover for the baſeſt treachery,

chery, which was deliberately meditated by the duke of Burgundy. He made his rival be aſſaſſinated in the ſtreets of Paris: He endeavoured for ſome time to conceal the part which he took in the crime: But being detected, he embraced a reſolution ſtill more criminal and more dangerous to ſociety, by openly avowing and juſtifying it [r]. The parliament of Paris itſelf, the tribunal of juſtice, heard the harangues of the duke's advocate in defence of aſſaſſination, which he denominated tyrannicide; and that aſſembly, partly influenced by faction, partly overawed by power, pronounced no ſentence of condemnation againſt this deteſtable doctrine [s]. The ſame queſtion was afterwards agitated before the council of Conſtance; and it was with difficulty, that a feeble deciſion, in favour of the contrary opinion, was procured from theſe fathers of the church, the miniſters of peace and of religion. But the miſchievous effects of that tenet, had they been before any wiſe doubtful, appeared ſufficiently from the preſent incidents. The commiſſion of this crime, which deſtroyed all truſt and ſecurity, rendered the war implacable between the French parties, and cut off every means of peace and accommodation. The princes of the blood, conſpiring with the young duke of Orleans and his brothers, made violent war on the duke of Burgundy; and the unhappy King, ſeized ſometimes by one party, ſometimes by another, tranſferred alternately to each of them the appearance of legal authority. The provinces were laid waſte by mutual depredations: Aſſaſſinations were every where committed from the animoſity of the ſeveral leaders; or what was equally terrible, executions were ordered without any legal or free trial, by pretended courts of judicature. The whole kingdom was diſtinguiſhed into two parties,

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[r] La Labourcur, liv. xxvii. chap. 23, 24.

[s] Ibid. liv. 27. chap. 27. Monſtrelet, chap. 39.

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the Burgundians, and the Armagnacs; ſo the adherents of the young duke of Orleans were called, from the count of Armagnac, father-in-law to that prince. The city of Paris, diſtracted between them, but inclining more to the Burgundians, was a perpetual ſcene of blood and violence; the King and royal family were often detained captives in the hands of the populace; their faithful miniſters were butchered or impriſoned before their face; and it was dangerous for any man, amidſt theſe enraged factions, to be diſtinguiſhed by a ſtrict adherence to the principles of probity and honour.

DURING this ſcene of general violence, there roſe into ſome conſideration a body of men, which uſually makes no figure in public tranſactions even in the moſt peaceful times; and that was the univerſity of Paris, whoſe opinions were ſometimes required, and more frequently offered, in the multiplied diſputes between the parties. The ſchiſm, by which the church was at that time divided, and which occaſioned frequent controverſies in the univerſity, had raiſed the maſters to an unuſual degree of importance; and this connexion between literature and ſuperſtition had beſtowed on the former a weight to which reaſon and knowledge are not, of themſelves, any wiſe intitled among men. But there was another ſociety whoſe ſentiments were much more deciſive at Paris, the fraternity of butchers, who, under the direction of their ringleaders, had declared for the duke of Burgundy, and committed the moſt violent outrages againſt the oppoſite party. To counterbalance their power, the Armagnacs made intereſt with the fraternity of carpenters; the populace ranged themſelves on the one ſide or the other; and the fate of the capital depended on the prevalence of either party.

THE advantage, which might be made of theſe confuſions, was eaſily perceived in England; and according to

to the maxims, which uſually prevail among nations, it was determined to lay hold of the favourable opportunity. The late King, who was courted by both the French parties, fomented the quarrel, by alternately ſending aſſiſtance to both; but the preſent ſovereign, impelled by the vigour of youth and the ardour of ambition, determined to puſh his advantages to a greater length, and to carry a violent war into that diſtracted kingdom. But while he was making preparations for that end, he tried to effectuate his purpoſe by negotiation; and he ſent over ambaſſadors to Paris, offering a perpetual peace and alliance; but demanding Catharine, the French King's daughter, in marriage, two millions of crowns as her portion, the payment of one million ſix hundred thouſand as the arrears of King John's ranſom, and the immediate poſſeſſion and full ſovereignty of Normandy and of all the other provinces, which had been raviſhed from England by the arms of Philip Auguſtus; together with the ſuperiority of Brittany and Flanders[t]. Such exorbitant demands ſhowed, that he was ſenſible of the preſent miſerable condition of France; and the terms, offered by the French court, tho' much inferior, diſcovered their conſciouſneſs of the ſame melancholy truth. They were willing to give him the princeſs in marriage, to pay him eight hundred thouſand crowns, to reſign the entire ſovereignty of Guienne, and to annex to that province the country of Perigord, Rovergue, Xaintonge, the Angoumois, and other territories[u]. As Henry rejected theſe

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[t] Rymer, vol. ix. p. 208.

[u] Ibid. p. 211. It is reported by ſome hiſtorians (ſee Hiſt. Croyl. Cont. p. 500) that the Dauphin, in deriſion of Henry's claims and diſſolute character, ſent him a box of tennis balls; intimating that theſe implements of play were better adapted to him than the inſtruments of war. But this ſtory is by no means credible; the great conceſſions made by the court of France, ſhow, that they had already entertained a juſt idea of Henry's character, as well as of their own ſituation.

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conditions, and ſcarce hoped that his own demands would be complied with, he never interrupted a moment his preparations for war, and having aſſembled a great fleet and army at Southampton, having invited all the nobility and military men of the kingdom to attend him by the hopes of glory and of conqueſt, he came to the ſea-ſide, with a purpoſe of embarking on his expedition.

But while Henry was meditating conqueſts upon his neighbours, he unexpectedly found himſelf in danger from a conſpiracy at home, which was happily detected in its infancy. The earl of Cambridge, ſecond ſon of the late duke of York, having eſpouſed the ſiſter of the earl of Marche, had zealouſly embraced the intereſts of that family; and had held ſome conferences with the lord Scrope of Maſham, and Sir Thomas Grey of Heton, about the means of recovering to that nobleman his juſt right to the crown of England. The conſpirators, ſo ſoon as they were detected, acknowledged their guilt to the King [a]; and Henry proceeded without delay to their trial and condemnation. The utmoſt that could be expected of the beſt King in thoſe ages, was, that he would ſo far obſerve the eſſentials of juſtice, as not to make an innocent perſon a victim to his ſeverity: But as to the formalities of law, which are often as material as the eſſentials themſelves, they were ſacrificed without ſcruple to the leaſt intereſt or convenience. A jury of commoners was ſummoned: The three conſpirators were indicted before them: The conſtable of Southampton caſtle ſwore, that they had ſeparately confeſſed their guilt to him: Without other evidence, Sir Thomas Gray was condemned and executed: But as the earl of Cambridge and lord Scrope, pleaded the privilege of

[a] Rymer, vol. ix. p. 300. T. Livii, p. 8.

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their peerage, Henry thought proper to ſummon a court of eighteen barons, in which the duke of Clarence preſided: The evidence, given before the jury, was read to them: The priſoners, tho' one of them was a prince, of the blood, were not examined, nor produced in court, nor heard in their own defence; but received ſentence of death upon this proof, which was every way irregular and illegal; and the ſentence was ſoon after executed. The earl of Marche was accuſed of having given his approbation to this conſpiracy, and received a general pardon from the King [b]. He was probably either innocent of the crime imputed to him, or had made reparation by his early repentance and diſcovery [c]. CHAP. XIX. 1415.

Invaſion of France.

THE ſucceſſes, which the arms of England have, in different ages, obtained over thoſe of France, have been much owing to the favourable ſituation of the former kingdom. The Engliſh, happily ſeated in an iſland, could make advantage of every misfortune which attended their neighbours, and were little expoſed to the danger of retaliation. They never left their own country, but when conducted by a King of extraordinary genius, or found their enemy divided by inteſtine factions, or were ſupported by a powerful alliance on the continent; and as all theſe circumſtances concurred at preſent to favour their enterprize, they had reaſon to expect from it a proportionable ſucceſs. The duke of Burgundy, expelled France by a combination of the princes, had been ſecretly ſoliciting the alliance of England [d]; and Henry knew, that that prince, tho' he ſcrupled at firſt to join the inveterate enemy of his country, would willingly, if he ſaw any probability of ſucceſs, both aſſiſt him with his Flemiſh ſubjects, and draw over to the ſame cauſe

[b] Rymer, vol. ix. p. 303.
[c] St. Remi, chap. lv. Godwin, p. 65.
[d] Rymer, vol. ix. p. 137, 138.

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14th August.

all his numerous partizans in France. Truſting therefore to this circumſtance, but without eſtabliſhing any concert with the duke, he put to ſea, and landed near Harfleur, at the head of an army of 6000 men at arms, and 24,000 foot, moſtly archers. He immediately began the ſiege of that place, which was valiantly defended by the lords d'Eſtoûteville, de Guitri, de Gaucourt, and others of the French nobility: But as the garriſon was weak, and the fortifications in bad repair, they were at laſt obliged to capitulate; and they promiſed to ſurrender if they received no ſuccour before the eighteenth of September. The day came, and there was no appearance of a French army to relieve them: Yet they ſtill delayed, on various pretences, to open their gates; till Henry, incenſed at their breach of faith, ordered a general aſſault, took the town by ſtorm, and put all the garriſon to the ſword; except ſome gentlemen, whom the victorious army, in hopes of reaping profit by their ranſom, were induced to ſpare [e].

The fatigues of this ſiege, and the unuſual heat of the ſeaſon, had ſo waſted the Engliſh army, that Henry could enter on no farther enterprize; and was obliged to think of returning into England. He had diſmiſſed his tranſports, which could not ſafely anchor in an open road upon the enemy's coaſt: and he lay under a neceſſity of marching by land to Calais, before he could reach a place of ſafety. A numerous French army of 14,000 men at arms and 40,000 foot was by this time aſſembled in Normandy under the conſtable d'Albert; a force, which, if prudently conducted, was ſufficient either to trample down the Engliſh in the open field, or to harraſs and reduce to nothing their ſmall army, before they could finiſh ſo long and difficult a march. Henry, there-

[e] De Labourcur, liv. 35. chap. 4, 5.

fore,

fore, very cautiouſly offered to ſacrifice his conqueſt of Harfleur for a ſafe paſſage to Calais; but his propoſal being rejected by the French court, he determined to force his way by valour and policy thro' all the oppoſition of the enemy [f]. That he might not diſcourage his own army by the appearance of flight, or expoſe them to thoſe hazards which naturally attend precipitate marches, he made very ſlow and deliberate journies [g], till he reached the Somme, which he propoſed to paſs at the ford of Blanquetague, the ſame place where Edward, in a like ſituation, had before eſcaped from Philip de Valois. But he found the ford rendered impaſſable by the precaution of the French general, and guarded by a ſtrong body on the oppoſite bank [h]; and he was therefore obliged to march higher up the river, in order to ſeek for a ſafe paſſage. He was continually harraſſed on his march by flying parties of the enemy; ſaw bodies of troops on the other ſide ready to oppoſe every attempt; his proviſions were cut off; his ſoldiers languiſhed with ſickneſs and fatigue; and his affairs ſeemed to be reduced to a deſperate ſituation: When he was ſo dexterous or ſo fortunate as to ſeize by ſurprize a paſſage near St. Quintin, which had not been ſufficiently guarded, and he ſafely carried over his army [i].

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HENRY then bent his march northwards to Calais; but he was ſtill expoſed to great and imminent danger from the enemy, who had alſo paſſed the Somme, and threw themſelves full in his way, with a purpoſe of intercepting his retreat. After he had paſſed the ſmall river of Ternois at Blangi, he was ſurprized to obſerve from the heights the whole French army drawn up in the plains of Azincour, and ſo poſted that it was impoſ-

Battle of Azincour. 25th Oct.

[f] Laboureur, liv. 35. chap. 6.
[g] T. Livii, p. 12.
[h] St. Remi, chap. 58. T. Livii, p. 13.

ſible

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sible for him to proceed on his march, without coming to an engagement. Nothing in appearance could be more unequal than the battle upon which all his safety and his fortunes depended. The English army were little more than half the number, which had disembarked at Harfleur; and they laboured under every discouragement and necessity. The enemy were four times more numerous; were headed by the Dauphin and all the princes of the blood; and were plentifully supplied with provisions of every kind. Henry's situation was exactly similar to that of Edward at Cressy, and that of the Black Prince at Poictiers; and the memory of these great events, inspiring the English with courage, made them hope for a like deliverance from their present difficulties. The King likewise observed the same prudent conduct which had been followed by these great commanders. He drew up his army on a narrow ground between two woods, which guarded each flank; and he patiently expected in that posture the attack of the enemy [k].

HAD the French constable been able, either to reason justly upon the present circumstances of the two armies, or to profit by past experience, he had declined a combat, and had waited till necessity, obliging the English to advance, had made them relinquish the advantages of their situation. But the impetuous valour of the French nobility, and a vain confidence in superior numbers, brought on this fatal action, which proved the source of infinite calamities to their country. The French archers on horseback and their men at arms, crowded in their ranks, advanced upon the English archers, who had fixed pallisadoes in their front to break the impression of the enemy, and who safely plyed them, from behind that defence, with a shower of arrows, which nothing could

[k] St. Remi, chap. 62.

resist.

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resist [l]. The clay soil, moistened by some rain, which had lately fallen, proved another obstacle to the force of the French cavalry: The wounded men and horses discomposed their ranks: The narrow compass, in which they were pent, hindered them from recovering any order: The whole army was a scene of confusion, terror, and dismay: And Henry, perceiving his advantage, ordered the English archers, who were light and unincumbered, to advance upon the enemy, and seize the moment of victory. They fell with their battle-axes upon the French, who, in their present posture, were incapable either of flying or of making defence: They hewed them in pieces without resistance [m]: And being seconded by the men at arms, who also pushed on against the enemy, they covered the field with the killed, wounded, dismounted, and overthrown. After all appearance of opposition was over, the English had leisure to make prisoners; and having advanced with uninterrupted success to the open plain, they there saw the remains of the French rear-guard, which still maintained the appearance of a line of battle. At the same time, they heard an alarm from behind: Some gentlemen of Picardy, having collected about 600 peasants, had fallen upon the English baggage, and were doing execution on the disarmed followers of the camp, who fled before them. Henry, seeing the enemy on all sides of him, began to entertain apprehensions from his prisoners; and he thought it necessary to issue general orders for putting them to death [n]: But on the discovery of the truth, he stopped the slaughter, and was still able to save a great number.

[l] Walsingham, p. 392. T. Livii, p. 19. La Laboureur, liv. 35. chap. 7. Monstrelet, chap. 147.

[m] Walsingham, p. 393. Ypod. Neust. p. 584.

[n] T. Livii, p. 20. Le Laboureur, liv. 35. chap. 7. St. Remi, chap. 62. Monstrelet, chap. 147. Hall, fol. 50.

No

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No battle was ever more fatal to France, by the number of princes and nobility, ſlain or taken priſoners. Among the former were the conſtable himſelf, the count de Nevers and the duke of Brabant, brothers to the duke of Burgundy, the count de Vaudemont, brother to the duke of Lorraine, the duke of Alençon, the duke of Barre, the count de Marle. The moſt eminent priſoners were the dukes of Orleans and Bourbon, the counts d'Eu, Vendôme, and Richemont, and the mareſchal de Boucicaut. An archbiſhop of Sens alſo periſhed fighting in this battle. The killed are computed on the whole to have amounted to ten thouſand men; and as the ſlaughter fell chiefly upon the cavalry, it is pretended, that, of theſe, eight thouſand were gentlemen [o]. Henry was maſter of 14,000 priſoners. The perſon of chief note, who fell among the Engliſh, was the duke of York, who periſhed fighting by the King's ſide, and had an end more honourable than his life. He was ſucceeded in his honours and fortune by his nephew, ſon to the earl of Cambridge, executed in the beginning of the year. All the Engliſh who were ſlain, exceeded not forty [p]; tho' ſome writers make the numbers more conſiderable [q].

The three great battles of Creſſy, Poictiers, and Azincour bore a ſingular reſemblance to each other, in their moſt conſiderable circumſtances. In all of them, there appears the ſame temerity in the Engliſh princes, who, without any object of moment, merely for the ſake of plunder, had ventured ſo far into the enemies country as to leave themſelves no reſource; and unleſs ſaved by the utmoſt imprudence in the French commanders, were,

[o] St. Remi, chap. 64. This author ſays he was preſent in the battle. Monſtrelet, chap. 148. makes the number amount to 8400.

[p] Walſingham, p. 393. Otterbourne, p. 277. St. Remi, chap. 64.

[q] Monſtrelet, chap. 147.

from

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from their very ſituation, expoſed to inevitable deſtruction. But allowance being made for this temerity, which, according to the irregular plans of war, followed in thoſe ages, ſeems to have been, in ſome meaſure, unavoidable; there appears, in the day of action, the ſame preſence of mind, dexterity, courage, firmneſs, and precaution on the part of the Engliſh: The ſame precipitation, confuſion, and vain confidence on the part of the French: And the events were ſuch as might have been expected from ſuch oppoſite conduct. The immediate conſequences too of theſe three great victories were ſimilar: Inſtead of puſhing the French with vigour, and taking advantage of their conſternation, the Engliſh princes, after their victory, ſeem rather to have relaxed their efforts, and to have allowed the enemy leiſure to recover from his loſſes. Henry interrupted not his march a moment after the battle of Azincour; he carried his priſoners to Calais, and from thence to England; he even concluded a truce with the enemy; and it was not till after an interval of two years that any body of Engliſh troops appeared in France.

THE poverty of all the European princes, and the ſmall reſources of their kingdoms, were the cauſes of theſe continual interruptions in their hoſtilities; and tho' the maxims of war were in general very deſtructive, their military operations were mere incurſions, which, without any ſettled plan, they carried on againſt each other. The luſtre, however, attending the victory of Azincour, procured ſome ſupplies from the Engliſh parliament; tho' ſtill unequal to the expences of a campaign. They granted Henry an entire fifteenth of moveables; and they conferred on him *for life* the duties of tonnage and poundage, and the ſubſidies on the exportation of wool and leather. This conceſſion is more conſiderable than that which had been granted to Richard II. by his

laſt

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last parliament, and which was afterwards, on his deposition, made so great an article of charge against him.

1415. State of France.

But during this interruption of hostilities from England, France was exposed to all the furies of civil war; and the several parties became every day more enraged against each other. The duke of Burgundy, in hopes that the French ministers and generals were entirely discredited, by the misfortune at Azincour, advanced with a great army to Paris, and attempted to re-instate himself in possession of the government, as well as of the King's person. But his partizans in that city were overawed by the court, and kept in subjection: The duke despaired of success: And he retired with his forces, which he immediately dispersed in the Low Countries [r].

1416. He was next year invited to make a new attempt, by some violent quarrels, which broke out in the royal family. The Queen, Isabella, daughter of the duke of Bavaria, who had been hitherto an inveterate enemy to the Burgundian faction, had received a great injury from the other party, which the implacable spirit of that princess was never able to forgive. The public necessities obliged the count d'Armagnac, created constable of France in place of d'Albert, to seize the great treasures which Isabella had amassed; and when she expressed her displeasure at this injury, he inspired into the weak mind of the King some jealousies against her conduct, and pushed him to seize and put to the torture, and afterwards throw into the Seine, Bois-bourdon, her favourite, whom he accused of a commerce of gallantry with that princess. The Queen herself was sent to Tours, and confined under a guard [s]; and after these multiplied insults, she no longer scrupled to enter into a correspondence

[r] Le Laboureur, liv. 35. chap. 10. Monstrelet, chap. 167.

[s] St. Remi, chap. 74.

pondence with the duke of Burgundy. As her ſon, the Dauphin Charles, a youth of ſixteen, was entirely governed by the faction of Armagnac, ſhe extended her animoſity to him, and ſought his deſtruction with the moſt unrelenting hatred. She had ſoon an opportunity of rendering her unnatural purpoſe effectual. The duke of Burgundy, in concert with her, entered France at the head of a great army: He made himſelf maſter of Amiens, Abbeville, Dourlens, Montreüil, and other towns in Picardy; Senlis, Rheims, Chalons, Troye, and Auxerre, declared themſelves for his party [t]. He got poſſeſſion of Beaumont, Pontoiſe, Vernon, Meulant, Montlheri, towns in the neighbourhood of Paris; and carrying farther his progreſs towards the weſt, he ſeized Etampes, Chartres, and other fortreſſes; and was at laſt able to deliver the Queen, who fled to Troye, and declared openly againſt thoſe miniſters, who, ſhe ſaid, detained her huſband in captivity [u]. CHAP. XIX. 1416.

MEAN-WHILE, the partizans of Burgundy raiſed a commotion in Paris, which always inclined to that faction. Lile-Adam, one of the duke's captains, was received into the city in the night-time, and headed the inſurrection of the people, which in a moment became ſo impetuous, that nothing could oppoſe it. The perſon of the King was ſeized: The Dauphin made his eſcape with difficulty: Great numbers of the faction of Armagnac were immediately butchered: The count himſelf, and many perſons of note, were thrown into priſon: Murders were daily committed from private animoſity, under pretence of faction: And the populace, not ſatiated with their fury, and deeming the courſe of public juſtice too dilatory, broke open the priſons, and put to

[t] St. Remi, chap. 79. [u] St. Remi, chap. 81. Monſtrelet, chap. 178, 179.

death

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death the count d'Armagnac, and all the other nobility who were there confined [x].

1417. New invasion of France. 1st August.

While France was in such furious combustion, and was so ill prepared to resist a foreign enemy, Henry, having collected some treasures, and levied an army, landed in Normandy at the head of 25,000 men; and met with no considerable opposition from any quarter. He made himself master of Falaise and Cherbourg; Evreux and

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Caen submitted to him; Pont de l'Arche opened its gates; and Henry, having subdued all the lower Normandy, and received a reinforcement of 15000 men from England [y], formed the siege of Roüen, which was defended by a garrison of 4000 men, seconded by the inhabitants, to the number of 15000 [z]. The cardinal des Ursins here attempted to incline him towards peace, and to moderate his pretensions: But the King replied to him in such terms as shewed that he was fully sensible of all his present advantages: "Do you not see," said he, "that God has led me hither as by the hand? "France has no sovereign: I have just pretensions on "that kingdom: Every thing is here in the utmost con- "fusion: No one thinks of resisting me. Can I have a "more sensible proof, that that Being, who disposes of "empires, has determined to put the crown of France "upon my head?" [a]

But tho' Henry had opened his mind to this scheme of ambition, he still continued to negotiate with his enemies, and endeavoured to obtain more secure, tho' less considerable advantages. He made, at the same time, offers of peace to both parties; to the Queen and duke

[x] St. Remi, chap. 85, 86. Monstrelet, chap. 118.
[y] Walsingham, p. 400. [z] St. Remi, chap. 91.
[a] Juvenal des Ursins.

of Burgundy on the one hand, who having poſſeſſion of the King's perſon, carried the appearance of legal authority [b]; and to the Dauphin on the other, who being the undoubted heir of the monarchy, was adhered to by every one that had a regard to the true intereſts of their country [c]. Theſe two parties alſo carried on a continual negotiation with each other. The terms propoſed on all ſides were perpetually varying: The events of the war, and the intrigues of the cabinet, intermingled with each other: And the fate of France remained long in this uncertainty. After many negotiations, Henry offered the Queen and the duke of Burgundy to make peace with them, to eſpouſe the princeſs Catharine, to accept of all the provinces ceded to Edward III. by the treaty of Bretigni, with the addition of Normandy, which he was to receive in full and entire ſovereignty [d]. Theſe terms were accepted of: There remained only ſome circumſtances to adjuſt, in order to the full completion of the treaty: But in this interval the duke of Burgundy ſecretly finiſhed his treaty with the Dauphin; and theſe two princes agreed to ſhare the royal authority during King Charles's life, and to unite their arms in expelling foreign enemies [e].

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THIS alliance, which ſeemed to cut off from Henry all hopes of farther ſucceſs, proved in the iſſue the moſt favourable event which could have happened for his pretenſions. Whether the Dauphin and duke of Burgundy were ever ſincere in their mutual engagements is uncertain; but very fatal effects reſulted from their momentary and ſeeming union. The two princes agreed to an interview, in order to concert the means

[b] Rymer, vol. ix. p. 717. 749. [c] Ibid. vol. ix. p. 626, &c.
[d] Ibid. vol. ix. p. 762. [e] Ibid. vol. ix. p. 776. St. Remi, chap. 95.

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of rendering effectual their common attack of the Engliſh; but how both or either of them could with ſafety venture upon this conference, it ſeemed ſomewhat difficult to contrive. The aſſaſſination perpetrated by the duke of Burgundy, and ſtill more, his open avowal of the deed, and defence of the doctrine, tended to diſſolve all the bands of civil ſociety; and even men of honour, who deteſted the example, might deem it juſt, on a favourable opportunity, to retaliate upon the author. The duke, therefore, who neither dared to give, nor could pretend to require any truſt, agreed to all the contrivances for mutual ſecurity, which were propoſed by the miniſters of the Dauphin. The two princes came to Montereau: The duke lodged in the caſtle; the Dauphin in the town, which was divided from the caſtle by the river Yonne: The bridge between them was choſen for the place of interview: Two high rails were drawn acroſs the bridge: The gates on each ſide were guarded, the one by the officers of the dauphin, the other by thoſe of the duke: The princes were to enter into the intermediate ſpace by the oppoſite gates, accompanied each by ten perſons; and with all theſe marks of diffidence, to conciliate their mutual friendſhip. But it appeared, that no precautions are ſufficient, where laws have no place, and where all principles of honour are utterly abandoned. Tannegui de Chatel, and others of the Dauphin's retainers, were zealous partizans of the houſe of Orleans, and they determined to ſeize the opportunity of revenging on the aſſaſſin the murder of that prince: They no ſooner entered the rails, than they drew their ſwords and attacked the duke of Burgundy: His friends were aſtoniſhed, and thought not of making any defence; and all of them either ſhared his fate, or were taken priſoners by the retinue of the Dauphin [f].

Aſſaſſination of the duke of Burgundy.

[f] St. Remi, chap. 97. Monſtrelet, chap. 211.

THE

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THE extreme youth of this prince, made it doubtful whether he was admitted into the ſecret of the conſpiracy: But as the deed was committed under his eye, by his moſt intimate friends, who ſtill retained their connexions with him, the blame of the action, which was certainly more imprudent than criminal, fell entirely upon him. The whole ſtate of affairs was every where changed by that unexpected incident. The city of Paris, which was paſſionately devoted to the family of Burgundy, broke out into the higheſt fury againſt the Dauphin. The court of King Charles entered from intereſt into the ſame views; and as all the miniſters about that monarch had owed their preferment to the late duke, and foreſaw their downfall if the Dauphin recovered poſſeſſion of his father's perſon, they were concerned to prevent by any means the ſucceſs of his enterprize. The Queen, perſevering in her unnatural animoſity againſt her ſon, encreaſed the general flame, and inſpired into the King, as far as he was ſuſceptible of any ſentiment, the ſame prejudices by which ſhe herſelf had long been actuated. But above all, Philip count de Charolois, now duke of Burgundy, thought himſelf bound by every tye of honour and of duty, to revenge the murder of his father, and to proſecute the aſſaſſin to the utmoſt extremity. And in this general tranſport of rage, every conſideration of national and family intereſt was buried in oblivion by all parties: The ſubjection to a foreign enemy, the expulſion of the lawful heir, the ſlavery of the kingdom, appeared but ſmall evils, if they led to the gratification of the preſent paſſion.

THE King of England had, before the death of the duke of Burgundy, profited extremely by the diſtractions of France, and was daily making a conſiderable progreſs in Normandy. He had taken Roüen after an obſtinate

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1419. siege[g]: He had made himself master of Pontoise and Gisors: He even threatened Paris, and by the terror of his power, had obliged the court to remove to Troye: And in the midst of his successes, he was agreeably surprised, to find his enemies, instead of combining against him for their mutual defence, disposed to rush into his arms, and to make him the instrument of their vengeance upon each other. A league was immediately concluded at Arras between him and the duke of Burgundy. That prince, without stipulating any thing for himself, except the prosecution of his father's murder, and the marriage of the duke of Bedford with his sister, was willing to sacrifice the kingdom to Henry's ambition, and he agreed to every demand, which was made by that monarch. In

1420. order to finish that astonishing treaty, which was to transfer the crown of France to a stranger, Henry went to Troye, accompanied by his brothers, the dukes of Clarence and Gloucester; and was there met by the duke of Burgundy. The imbecility, into which Charles had fallen, made him incapable of seeing any thing but thro' the eyes of those who attended him; as they, on their part, saw every thing thro' the medium of their passions. The treaty, being already concerted among the parties, was immediately drawn and signed and ratified: Henry's will seemed to be a law throughout this whole negotiation: Nothing was attended to but his advantages.

Treaty of Troye. THE principal articles of the treaty were, that Henry should espouse the princess Catharine: That King Charles, during his lifetime, should enjoy the title and dignity of King of France: That Henry should be declared and acknowledged heir of the monarchy, and be entrusted with the present administration of the government: That that kingdom should pass to his heirs general: That France and England should for ever be united

[g] T. Livii, p. 69. Monstrelet, chap. 201.

under one King; but ſhould ſtill retain their ſeveral uſages, cuſtoms, and privileges: That all the princes, peers, vaſſals, and communities of France, ſhould ſwear, both that they would adhere to the future ſucceſſion of Henry, and pay him preſent obedience as regent: That that prince ſhould unite his arms to thoſe of King Charles and the duke of Burgundy, in order to ſubdue the adherents of Charles, the pretended Dauphin: And that theſe three princes ſhould make no peace nor truce with him but by common conſent and agreement [a]. CHAP. XIX. 1420.

SUCH was the tenor of this famous treaty; a treaty, which as nothing but the moſt violent animoſity could dictate, ſo nothing but the power of the ſword could carry it into execution. It is hard to ſay, whether its conſequences, had it taken place, would have proved more pernicious to England or to France. It muſt have reduced the former kingdom to the rank of a province: It would have entirely disjointed the ſucceſſion of the latter monarchy, and have brought on the deſtruction of every deſcendant of the royal family: As the houſes of Orleans, Anjou, Alencon, Brittany, Bourbon, and of Burgundy itſelf, whoſe titles were preferable to that of the Engliſh princes, would on that account have been expoſed to perpetual jealouſy and perſecution from the ſovereign. There was even a palpable deficiency in Henry's claim, which no art could palliate. For beſides the inſuperable objections, to which Edward IIId's pretenſions were expoſed, *he* was not heir to that monarch: If female ſucceſſion was admitted, the right had devolved to the houſe of Mortimer: Allowing, that Richard II. was a tyrant, and that Henry IVth's merits, in depoſing him, were ſo great towards the Engliſh, as to juſtify that nation for placing him on the throne; Richard had nowiſe offended

[a] Rymer, vol. ix. p. 895. St. Remi, chap. 101. Monſtrelet, chap. 223.

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France, and his rival had merited nothing of that kingdom: It could not poſſibly be pretended, that the crown of France was become an appendage to that of England; and that a prince, who, by any means, got poſſeſſion of the latter, was, without farther queſtion, intitled to the former. So that on the whole, it muſt be allowed, that Henry's claim to France was, if poſſible, ſtill more unintelligible, than the title, by which his father had mounted the throne of England.

Marriage of the King.

BUT tho' all theſe conſiderations were overlooked, amidſt the hurry of paſſions, by which the courts of France and Burgundy were actuated, they would neceſſarily revive during times of more leiſure and tranquillity; and it behoved Henry to puſh his preſent advantages, and allow men no leiſure for reaſon or reflection. In a few days after, he eſpouſed the princeſs, Catharine: He carried his father-in-law to Paris, and put himſelf in poſſeſſion of that capital: He obtained from the parliament and the three eſtates a ratification of the treaty of Troye: He ſupported the duke of Burgundy in procuring a ſentence againſt the murderers of his father: And he immediately turned his arms with ſucceſs againſt the adherents of the Dauphin, who, ſo ſoon as he heard of the treaty of Troye, took on him the ſtyle and authority of regent, and appealed to God and his ſword for the maintenance of his title.

THE firſt place which Henry ſubdued, was Sens, which opened its gates after a ſlight reſiſtance. With the ſame facility, he made himſelf maſter of Montereau. The defence of Melun was more obſtinate; Barbaſan, the governor, held out for the ſpace of four months againſt the beſiegers; and it was famine alone which obliged him to capitulate. Henry promiſed to ſpare the lives of all the garriſon, except ſuch as were accomplices in the murder of the duke of Burgundy; and as Barbaſan himſelf was ſuſpected to be of the number, his puniſh-

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ment was demanded by Philip: But the King had the generosity to intercede for him, and to prevent his execution [b]. CHAP. XIX.

THE necessity of providing supplies both of men and money obliged Henry to go over to England; and he left the duke of Exeter, his uncle, governor of Paris during his absence. The authority, which naturally attends success, procured him from the English parliament a subsidy of a fifteenth; but if we may judge by the smallness of this supply, the nation was nowise sanguine on their King's victories; and in proportion as the prospect of their union with France came nearer, they began to open their eyes, and to see the dangerous consequences with which it must necessarily be attended. It was fortunate for Henry, that he had other resources, besides pecuniary supplies from his native subjects. The provinces, which he had already conquered, maintained his troops; and the hopes of farther advantages allured to his standard all men of ambitious spirits in England, who desired to signalize themselves by arms. He assembled a new army of twenty four thousand archers, and four thousand horsemen [c], and marched them to Dover, the place of embarkation. Every thing had remained in tranquillity at Paris, under the duke of Exeter; but there had happened in another quarter of the kingdom a misfortune, which hastened his departure. 1421.

THE detention of the King of Scots in England had hitherto proved very advantageous to Henry; and by keeping the regent in awe, had preserved, during the whole course of the French war, the northern frontier in tranquillity. But when intelligence arrived in Scotland, of the progress made by Henry, and the near prospect of his succession to the crown of France, the nation was

[b] Hollingshed, p. 577. [c] Monstrelet, chap. 242.

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alarmed, and foreſaw their own inevitable ruin, if the ſubjection of their ally left them to combat alone an enemy, who was already ſo much ſuperior to them in power and riches. The regent entered into the ſame views; and tho' he declined an open war with England, he permitted a body of ſeven thouſand Scots, under the command of the earl of Buchan, his ſecond ſon, to be tranſported into France for the ſervice of the Dauphin. To render this aid ineffectual, Henry had carried over the young King of Scots, whom he obliged to ſend orders to his countrymen to leave the French ſervice; but the Scots general replied, that he would obey no commands which came from a King in captivity, and that a prince, while in the hands of his enemy, was nowiſe entitled to authority. Theſe troops, therefore, continued ſtill to act under the earl of Buchan; and were employed by the Dauphin to oppoſe the progreſs of the duke of Clarence in Anjou. The two armies encountered at Baugé: The Engliſh were defeated: The duke himſelf was ſlain by Sir Allan Swinton, a Scots knight, who commanded a company of men at arms: And the earls of Somerſet [d], Dorſet, and Huntingdon, were taken priſoners [e]. This was the firſt action, which turned the tide of ſucceſs againſt the Engliſh; and the Dauphin, that he might both attach the Scots to his ſervice, and reward the valour and conduct of the earl of Buchan, honoured that nobleman with the office of conſtable.

BUT the arrival of the King of England, with ſo conſiderable an army, was more than ſufficient to repair

[d] His name was John, and he was afterwards created duke of Somerſet. He was grandſon of John of Gaunt duke of Lancaſter. The earl of Dorſet was brother to Somerſet, and ſucceeded him in that title.

[e] St. Remi, chap. 110. Monſtrelet, chap. 239. Hall, fol. 76.

this

this loſs. Henry was received at Paris with great expreſ- CHAP. XIX.
ſions of joy; ſo obſtinate were the prejudices of the peo- 1421.
ple: And he immediately conducted his army to Chartres, which had long been beſieged by the Dauphin. That prince decamped on the approach of the Engliſh; and being reſolved to decline a battle, he retired with his army [f]. Henry made himſelf maſter of Dreux without a blow: He laid ſiege to Meaux at the ſollicitation of the Pariſians, who were much incommoded by the garriſon of that place. This enterprize employed the Engliſh arms during the ſpace of eight months: The baſtard of Vaurus, the governor of Meaux, diſtinguiſhed himſelf by an obſtinate defence; but was at laſt obliged to ſurrender at diſcretion. The cruelty of this officer was equal to his bravery: He was accuſtomed to hang without diſtinction all the Engliſh and Burgundians who fell into his hands: And Henry, in revenge of his barbarity, ordered him immediately to be hanged on the ſame tree, which he had made the inſtrument of his inhuman executions [g].

THIS ſucceſs was followed by the ſurrender of many other places in the neighbourhood of Paris, which held for the Dauphin: That prince was chaced beyond the Loire, and almoſt totally abandoned all the northern provinces: He was even purſued into the ſouth by the united arms of the Engliſh and Burgundians, and threatened with total deſtruction: Notwithſtanding the bravery and fidelity of his captains, he ſaw himſelf unequal to his enemies in the open field; and found it neceſſary to temporize, and to avoid all hazardous actions with a rival, who had gained ſo much the aſcendant over him. And to crown all the other proſperities of Henry, his Queen

[f] St. Remi, chap. 3.

[g] Rymer, vol. x. p. 212. T. Livii, p. 92, 93. St. Remi, chap. 116. Monſtrelet, chap. 260.

was

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1421. was delivered of a ſon, who was called by his father's name, and whoſe birth was celebrated by rejoicings no leſs pompous and no leſs ſincere at Paris than at London. The infant prince ſeemed to be univerſally regarded as the future heir of both monarchies.

1422. Death, But the glory of Henry, when it had nearly reached the ſummit, was ſtopped ſhort by the hand of nature; and all his mighty projects vaniſhed into ſmoke. He was ſeized with a fiſtula, which the ſurgeons at that time had not ſkill enough to cure; and he was at laſt ſenſible, that his diſtemper was mortal, and that his end was approaching. He ſent for his brother the duke of Bedford, the earl of Warwic, and a few more noblemen, whom he had honoured with his confidence; and he delivered to them, in great tranquillity, his laſt will with regard to the government of his kingdom and family. He entreated them to continue, towards his infant ſon, the ſame fidelity and attachment, which they had always profeſſed to him during his lifetime, and which had been cemented by ſo many mutual good offices. He expreſſed his indifference on the approach of death; and tho' he regreted, that he muſt leave unfiniſhed a work ſo happily begun, he declared himſelf confident, that the final acquiſition of France would be the effect of their prudence and valour. He left the regency of that kingdom to his eldeſt brother, the duke of Bedford; that of England to his younger, the duke of Gloceſter; and the care of his ſon's perſon to the earl of Warwic. He recommended to all of them an anxious care to maintain the friendſhip of the duke of Burgundy; and adviſed them never to give liberty to the French princes taken at Azincour, till his ſon was of age, and could himſelf hold the reins of government. And he conjured them, if the ſucceſs of their arms ſhould not enable them to place young Henry

on the throne of France, never at leaſt to make peace with that kingdom, unleſs the enemy, by the ceſſion of Normandy, and its annexation to the crown of England, made compenſation for all the hazards and expence of his enterprize [h]. CHAP. XIX. 1422.

He next applied himſelf to his devotions, and ordered his chaplain to read the ſeven penitential pſalms. When he came to that paſſage of the fifty-firſt pſalm; *Build thou the walls of Jeruſalem*; he interrupted him, and profeſſed his ſerious intention, after he ſhould have fully ſubdued France, to have made a cruſade againſt the infidels, and recover poſſeſſion of the Holy Land [i]. So ingenious are men in deceiving themſelves, that Henry forgot in thoſe moments, all the blood ſpilt by his ambition; and received comfort from this late and feeble reſolve, which, as the mode of theſe enterprizes was now paſt, he certainly would never have carried into execution. He expired in the thirty fourth year of his age and the tenth of his reign. 31 Auguſt.

This prince poſſeſſed many eminent virtues; and if we give indulgence to ambition in a monarch, or rank it, as the vulgar are inclined to do, among his virtues, they were unſtained by any conſiderable blemiſh. His abilities appeared, equally in the cabinet and in the field; the boldneſs of his enterprizes was no leſs remarkable than his perſonal valour in conducting them. He had the talent of attaching his friends by affability, and of gaining his enemies by addreſs and clemency. The Engliſh, dazzled by the luſtre of his character, ſtill more than by that of his victories, were reconciled to the defects of his title: The French almoſt forgot that he was an enemy: And his care of maintaining juſtice in his civil adminiſtration, and preſerving diſcipline in and character of the King.

[h] Monſtrelet, chap. 265. Hall, fol. 80.

[i] St. Remi, chap. 118. Monſtrelet, chap. 265.

his

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his armies, made ſome amends to both nations for the calamities inſeparable from thoſe wars, in which his ſhort reign was almoſt entirely occupied. That he could forgive the earl of Marche, who had a better right to the throne than himſelf, is a ſure proof of his magnanimity; and that the earl relied ſo entirely on his friendſhip is no leſs a proof of his eſtabliſhed character for candour and ſincerity. There remain in hiſtory few inſtances of ſuch mutual truſt; and ſtill fewer where neither party found reaſon to repent it.

THE exterior figure of this great prince, as well as his deportment, was engaging. His ſtature was ſomewhat above the middle ſize; his countenance beautiful; his limbs genteel and ſlender, but full of vigour; and he excelled in all warlike and manly exerciſes [k]. He left by his Queen, Catherine of France, only one ſon, not full nine months old; whoſe misfortunes in the courſe of his life, ſurpaſſed all the glories and ſucceſſes of his father.

IN leſs than two months after Henry's death, Charles VI. of France, his father-in-law, terminated his unhappy life. He had, for ſeveral years, poſſeſſed only the appearance of royal authority: Yet was this circumſtance of conſiderable moment to the Engliſh; and divided the duty and affections of the French between them and the Dauphin. This prince was proclaimed and crowned King of France at Poictiers, under the name of Charles VII. Rheims, the place where that ceremony was uſually performed, was at that time in the hands of his enemies.

CATHERINE of France, Henry's widow, married ſoon after his death, a Welch gentleman, Sir Owen Tudor, ſaid to be deſcended from the antient princes of

[k] T. Livii, p. 41

that

that country: She bore him two ſons, Edmund and Jaſper, of whom, the eldeſt was created earl of Richmond; the ſecond earl of Pembroke. The family of Tudor, firſt raiſed to diſtinction by this alliance, mounted afterwards the throne of England. CHAP. XIX. 1422.

THE long ſchiſm, which had divided the Latin church for near forty years, was finally terminated in this reign by the council of Conſtance; which depoſed the Pope, John XXIII. for his crimes, and elected Martin V. in his place, who was acknowledged by almoſt all the kingdoms of Europe. This great and unuſual act of authority in the council gave the Roman Pontiffs ever after a mortal antipathy to theſe aſſemblies. The ſame jealouſy, which had long prevailed in moſt European countries, between the civil ariſtocracy and monarchy, now alſo took place between theſe powers in the eccleſiaſtical body. But the great ſeparation of the biſhops in the ſeveral ſtates, and the difficulty of aſſembling them, gave the Pope a mighty advantage, and made it more eaſy for him to collect all the power of the Hierarchy in his own perſon. The cruelty and treachery which attended the puniſhments of John Huſs and Jerome of Prague, the unhappy diſciples of Wickliffe, who were burned alive for their errors by this council, prove this melancholy truth, that toleration is none of the virtues of prieſts in any form of eccleſiaſtical government. But as the Engliſh prince had little or no concern in theſe great tranſactions, we are here the more conciſe in relating them. Miſcellaneous tranſactions.

THE firſt commiſſion of array, which we meet with, was iſſued in this reign[1]. The military part of the feudal ſyſtem, which was the moſt eſſential circumſtance of it, was entirely diſſolved; and could no longer ſerve for the defence of the kingdom. Henry, therefore, when he

[1] Rymer, vol. ix. p. 254, 255.

went

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went to France in 1415, empowered certain commissioners to take a review of all the freemen in each county able to bear arms, to divide them into companies, and to keep them in readiness for resisting the enemy. This was the æra, when the feudal militia gave place to one which was perhaps still less orderly and regular.

We have an authentic and exact account of the ordinary revenues of the crown during this reign; and they amount only to 55,714 pounds 10 shillings and 10 pence a-year[m]. This is nearly the same with the revenues of Henry III. and the Kings of England had neither become much richer nor poorer in the course of so many years. The ordinary expences of the government amounted to 52,507 pounds 16 shillings and 10 pence: So that the King had of surplus only 3206 pounds 14 shillings for the support of his household; for his wardrobe; for the expence of embassies; and other articles. This sum was nowise sufficient; he was therefore obliged to have frequent recourse to parliamentary supplies, and was thus, even in time of peace, not altogether independant of his people. But wars were a monstrous expence, which neither the prince's ordinary revenue, nor the extraordinary supplies, were able to bear; and he was always reduced to many miserable shifts, in order to make any tolerable figure in them. He commonly borrowed money from all quarters; he pawned his jewels, and sometimes the crown itself[n]; he ran in arrears to his army; and he was often obliged, notwithstanding all these expedients, to stop in the midst of his career of victory, and to grant truces to the enemy. The high pay which was given to soldiers agreed very ill with this low revenue. All the extraordinary supplies granted by parliament to Henry during the course of his reign were

[m] Rymer, vol. x. p. 113.

[n] Ibid. p. 190.

only

only seven tenths and fifteenths, about 203,000 pounds [o]. It is easy to compute how soon this money must be exhausted by armies of 24,000 archers, and 6000 horse; when each archer had a sixpence a-day [p], and each horseman two shillings. The most splendid successes proved commonly very fruitless, when supported by so poor a revenue; and the debts and difficulties, which he thereby incurred, made the King pay dear for his victories. The civil administration, likewise, even in time of peace, could never be very regular, where the government was so ill enabled to support itself. Henry a year before his death owed debts, which had been contracted when he was prince of Wales [q]. It was in vain that the parliament pretended to restrain him from arbitrary practices, when he was reduced to such necessities. Tho' the right of levying purveyance, for instance, had been expressly guarded against by the great charter itself, and was frequently complained of by the commons, it was found absolutely impracticable to abolish it; and the parliament at length, submitting to it as a legal prerogative, contented themselves with enacting laws to limit and confine it. The duke of Gloucester, in the reign of Richard II. possessed a revenue of 60,000 crowns, (about 30,000 pounds a-year of our present money) as we learn from Froissart [r], and was consequently richer than the King himself, if all circumstances be duly considered.

It is remarkable, that the city of Calais alone was an annual expence on the crown of 19,119 pounds [s];

[o] Parliamentary History, vol. ii. p. 168.

[p] It appears from many passages of Rymer, particularly vol. ix. p. 258, that the King paid 20 marks a-year for an archer, which is a good deal above sixpence a-day. The price had risen, as is natural, by raising the denomination of money.

[q] Rymer, vol. x. p. 114.

[r] Liv. iv. chap. 86.

[s] Rymer, vol. x. p. 113.

that

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that is, above a third of the common charge of the government in time of peace. This fortreſs was of no uſe to the defence of England, and only gave that kingdom an inlet to annoy France. Ireland coſt two thouſand pounds a-year, over and above its own revenue; which was certainly very low. Every thing contributes to give us a very mean idea of the ſtate of Europe in thoſe ages.

From the moſt early times, till the reign of Edward III. the denomination of money had never been altered: A pound ſterling was ſtill a pound troy; that is, about three pounds of our preſent money. That conqueror was firſt obliged to innovate in this important article. In the twentieth year of his reign, he coined twenty-two ſhillings out of a pound troy; in his twenty-ſeventh year he coined twenty-five ſhillings. But Henry V. who was alſo a conqueror, raiſed ſtill farther the denomination, and coined thirty ſhillings from a pound troy[t]: His revenue therefore would be about 110,000 pounds of our preſent money; and by the cheapneſs of proviſions, would be equivalent to above 330,000 pounds.

None of the princes of the houſe of Lancaſter ventured to impoſe taxes without conſent of parliament: Their doubtful or bad title became ſo far of advantage to the conſtitution. The rule was then fixed, and could not ſafely be broke afterwards even by more abſolute princes.

[t] Fleetwood's Chronicon Precioſum, p. 52.

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HENRY VI.

Government during the minority——State of France——Military operations——Battle of Verneüil——Siege of Orleans——The maid of Orleans——The ſiege of Orleans raiſed——The King of France crowned at Rheims——Prudence of the duke of Bedford——Execution of the maid of Orleans——Defection of the duke of Burgundy——Death of the duke of Bedford——Decline of the Engliſh in France——Truce with France——Marriage of the King with Margaret of Anjou——Murder of the duke of Gloceſter——State of France——Renewal of the war with France——The Engliſh expelled France.

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DURING the reigns of the Lancaſtrian princes, the authority of parliament ſeems to have been more confirmed, and the privileges of the people more regarded, than during any former period; and the two preceding Kings, tho' men of great ſpirit and abilities, abſtained from ſuch exertions of prerogative, as even weak princes, whoſe title was undiſputed, were tempted to think that they might venture upon with impunity. The long minority, of which there was now the proſpect, encouraged ſtill farther the lords and commons to extend their authority; and without paying much regard to the verbal deſtination of Henry V. they aſſumed the power of giving a new arrangement to the whole adminiſtration. They declined altogether the name of *Re-*

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gent with regard to England: They appointed the duke of Bedford to be *protector* or *guardian* of that kingdom, a title which they ſuppoſed to imply leſs authority: They inveſted the duke of Gloceſter with the ſame dignity during the abſence of his elder brother [a]; and in order to limit the power of both theſe princes, they named a council, without whoſe advice and approbation no meaſure of importance could be determined [b]. The perſon and education of the infant prince was committed to Henry Beaufort, biſhop of Wincheſter, his great uncle, and the legitimated ſon of John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaſter; who, as his family could never have any pretenſions to the crown, might ſafely, they thought, be intruſted with that important charge [c]. The two princes, the dukes of Bedford and Gloceſter, who might deem themſelves injured by this plan of government, yet, being perſons of great integrity and honour, acquieſced willingly in any appointment, which ſeemed to give ſecurity to the public; and as the wars in France appeared to be the object of greateſt moment, they avoided every diſpute, which might throw an obſtacle in the way of theſe conqueſts.

State of France.

WHEN the ſtate of affairs between the Engliſh and French Kings was conſidered with a ſuperficial eye, every advantage ſeemed to be on the ſide of the former; and the total expulſion of Charles appeared to be an event, which might naturally be expected from the ſuperior power of his rival. Tho' Henry was yet in his infancy, the adminiſtration was devolved on the duke of Bedford, the moſt accompliſhed prince of his age; whoſe experience, prudence, valour, and generoſity perfectly qualified him for this high office, and enabled him both

[a] Rymer, vol. x. p. 261. Cotton, p. 564.
[b] Cotton, p. 564.
[c] Hall, fol. 83. Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 27.

to

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to maintain union among his friends, and to gain the confidence of his enemies. The whole power of England was at his command: He was at the head of armies enured to victory: He was ſeconded by the moſt renowned generals of the age, the earls of Somerſet, Warwic, Saliſbury, Suffolk, and Arundel, Sir John Talbot, and Sir John Faſtolfe: And beſides Guienne, the antient inheritance of England, he was maſter of the capital, and of all the northern provinces, which were beſt enabled to furniſh him with ſupplies both of men and money, and to aſſiſt and ſupport his Engliſh forces.

But Charles, notwithſtanding the preſent inferiority of his power, poſſeſſed ſome advantages, derived partly from his ſituation, partly from his perſonal character, which promiſed him ſucceſs, and ſerved, firſt to controul, then to overbalance, the ſuperior force and opulence of his enemies. He was the true and undoubted heir of the monarchy: Every Frenchman, who knew the intereſts, or deſired the independance of his country, turned his eyes towards him as its ſole refuge: The excluſion given him, by the imbecillity of his father, and the forced or precipitate conſent of the ſtates, had plainly no validity: That ſpirit of faction, which had blinded the people, could not long hold them in ſo groſs a deluſion: Their national and inveterate hatred againſt the Engliſh, the authors of all their miſeries, muſt ſoon revive, and give them an indignation at bending their necks under the yoke of that hoſtile people: Great nobles and princes, accuſtomed to maintain an independance againſt their native ſovereigns, would never endure a ſubjection to ſtrangers: And tho' moſt of the princes of the blood were, ſince the fatal battle of Azincour, detained priſoners in England, the inhabitants of their demeſnes, their friends, their vaſſals, all declared a

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zealous attachment to the King, and exerted themſelves in reſiſting the violence of foreign invaders.

1422. CHARLES himſelf, tho' only in his twentieth year, was of a character well calculated to become the object of theſe benevolent ſentiments; and perhaps from the favour, which naturally attends youth, was the more likely, on account of his tender age, to acquire the good-will of his native ſubjects. He was a prince of the moſt friendly and benign diſpoſition, of eaſy and familiar manners, and of a juſt and ſound, tho' not a very vigorous underſtanding. Sincere, generous, affable, he engaged from affection the ſervices of his followers, even while his low fortunes might make it their intereſt to deſert him; and the lenity of his temper could pardon in them thoſe ſallies of diſcontent, to which princes in his ſituation are ſo frequently expoſed. The love of pleaſure often ſeduced him into indolence; but amidſt all his irregularities the goodneſs of his heart ſtill ſhone forth; and by exerting at intervals his courage and activity, he proved, that his general remiſſneſs proceeded not from the want, either of a juſt ſpirit of ambition, or of perſonal valour.

THO' the virtues of this amiable prince lay ſome time in obſcurity, the duke of Bedford knew, that his title alone made him formidable, and that every foreign aſſiſtance would be requiſite, ere an Engliſh regent could hope to complete the conqueſt of France; an enterprize, which, however it might ſeem to be much advanced, was ſtill expoſed to many and great difficulties. The chief circumſtance, which had procured to the Engliſh all their preſent advantages, was the reſentment of the duke of Burgundy againſt Charles; and as that prince ſeemed intent rather in gratifying his paſſion than conſulting his intereſts, it was the more eaſy for the regent, by demonſtrations of reſpect and confidence, to retain him

him in the alliance of England. He bent therefore all his endeavours to that purpose: He gave the duke every proof of friendship and regard: He even proffered him the regency of France, which Philip declined: And that he might corroborate national connexions by private ties, he concluded his own marriage with the princess of Burgundy, which had been stipulated by the treaty of Arras. CHAP. XX. 1422.

BEING sensible, that next to the alliance of Burgundy, the friendship of the duke of Brittany was of the greatest importance towards forwarding the English conquests; and that, as the provinces of France, already subdued, lay between the dominions of these two princes, he could never hope for any security without preserving his connexions with them; he was very intent on strengthening himself also from that quarter. The duke of Brittany, having received many just reasons of displeasure from the ministers of Charles, had already acceded to the treaty of Troye, and had, with other vassals of the crown, done homage to Henry V. in quality of heir to the kingdom: But as the regent knew, that the duke was much governed by his brother, the count de Richemont, he endeavoured to fix his friendship, by paying his court and doing services to this haughty and ambitious prince. 1423.

ARTHUR, count de Richemont, had been taken prisoner at the battle of Azincour, had been treated with great indulgence by the late King, and had even been permitted on his parole to take a journey into Brittany, where the state of affairs required his presence. The death of that victorious monarch happened before Richemont's return; and this prince pretended, that, as his word was given personally to Henry V. he was not bound to fulfil it towards his son and successor: A chicane which the regent, as he could not force him to compliance, deemed it prudent to overlook. An inter- 17th April.

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view was settled at Amiens between the dukes of Bedford, Burgundy, and Brittany, at which the count de Richemont was also present [a]: The alliance was renewed between these princes: And the regent persuaded Philip to give in marriage to Richemont his eldest sister, widow of the deceased Dauphin, Lewis, the elder brother of Charles. Thus Arthur was connected both with the regent and the duke of Burgundy, and seemed engaged by interest to prosecute the same object, in forwarding the progress of the English arms.

WHILE the vigilance of the duke of Bedford was employed in gaining or confirming these allies, whose neighbourhood rendered them so important, he did not overlook the state of more remote countries. The duke of Albany, regent of Scotland, had died; and his power had devolved to Murdac, his son, a prince of a weak understanding and of indolent dispositions; who, far from possessing the talents requisite for the government of that fierce people, was not even able to maintain authority in his own family, or restrain the petulance and insolence of his sons. The ardour of the Scots to serve in France, where Charles treated them with great honour and distinction, and where the regent's brother enjoyed the dignity of constable, broke out afresh under this feeble administration: New succours daily came over, and filled the armies of the French King: The earl of Douglas conducted a reinforcement of 5000 men to his assistance. And it was justly to be dreaded, that the Scots, by commencing open hostilities in the north, would occasion a diversion still more considerable of the English power, and would ease Charles, in part, of that load, by which he was at present so grievously oppressed.

[a] Hall, fol. 84. Monstrelet, vol. i. p. 4. Stowe, p. 364.

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The duke of Bedford, therefore, perſuaded the Engliſh council to form an alliance with James their priſoner; to free that prince from his long captivity; and to connect him with England, by marrying him to a daughter of the Earl of Somerſet and couſin of the young King [b]. As the Scots regent, tired of his preſent dignity, which he was not able to ſupport, was now become entirely ſincere in his applications for James's liberty, the treaty was ſoon concluded; forty thouſand pounds of ranſom were ſtipulated [c]; and the King of Scots was reſtored to the throne of his anceſtors, and proved, in his ſhort reign, one of the moſt illuſtrious princes, who had ever governed that kingdom. He was murdered in 1437 by his traiterous kinſman the earl of Athole. His affections inclined him to the party of France; but the Engliſh had never reaſon, during his life-time, to complain of any breach of the neutrality by Scotland.

Military operations.

BUT the regent was not ſo employed in theſe political negotiations as to neglect the operations of war, from which alone he could hope to ſucceed in expelling the French monarch. Tho' the chief ſeat of Charles's power lay in the ſouthern provinces, on the other ſide of the Loire; his partizans were poſſeſſed of ſome fortreſſes in the northern, and even in the neighbourhood of Paris; and it behoved the duke of Bedford firſt to clear theſe countries of the enemy, before he could think of attempting more diſtant conqueſts. The caſtle of Dorſoy was taken after a ſiege of ſix weeks: That of Noyelle and the town of Rüe in Picardy underwent the ſame fate: Pont ſur Seine, Vertus, Montaigu were ſubjected by the Engliſh arms: And a more conſiderable advantage was ſoon after gained

[b] Hall, fol. 86. Stowe, p. 364. Graſton, p. 501.
[c] Rymer, vol. x. p. 299, 300. 326.

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1423. by the united forces of England and Burgundy. John Stuart, conſtable of Scotland, and the lord d'Eſtiſſac had formed the ſiege of Crevant in Burgundy: The earls of Saliſbury and Suffolk, with the count de Toulongeon, were ſent to its relief: A fierce and well diſputed action enſued; The Scots and French were defeated: The conſtable of Scotland and the count de Ventadour were taken priſoners: And above a thouſand men, among whom was Sir William Hamilton, were left on the field of battle [d]. The taking of Gaillon upon the Seine, and of la Charité upon the Loire was the fruit of this victory: And as this latter place opened an entrance into the ſouthern provinces, the acquiſition of it appeared on that account of the greater importance to the duke of Bedford, and ſeemed to promiſe a ſucceſsful iſſue to the war.

1424. THE more King Charles was threatened with an invaſion in thoſe provinces which adhered to him, the more neceſſary it became, that he ſhould retain poſſeſſion of every fortreſs, which he ſtill held within the quarters of the enemy. The duke of Bedford had beſieged in perſon, during the ſpace of three months, the town of Yvri in Normandy; and the brave governor, unable to make any longer defence, was obliged to capitulate; and he agreed to ſurrender the town, if, before a certain term, no relief arrived to him. Charles, informed of theſe conditions, determined to make an attempt for ſaving the place. He collected, with ſome difficulty, an army of 14,000 men, of whom the half were Scots; and he ſent them thither under the command of the earl of Buchan, the conſtable of France; who was attended by the earl of Douglas, his country-

[d] Hall, fol. 85. Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 8. Holingſhed, p. 586. Grafton, p. 500.

man,

man, the duke of Alençon, the mareſchal de la Fayette, the count d'Aumale, and the viſcount de Narbonne. When the conſtable arrived within a few leagues of Yvri, he found that he was come too late, and that the place was already ſurrendered. He immediately turned to the left, and ſat down before Verneüil, which the inhabitants, in ſpite of the garriſon, delivered up to him [a]. Buchan might now have returned in ſafety, and with the glory of making an acquiſition no leſs important than the place, which he was ſent to relieve: But hearing of Bedford's approach, he called a council of war; and aſked their opinions with regard to the conduct which he ſhould follow in this emergence. The wiſer part of the council declared for a retreat; and repreſented, that all the paſt misfortunes of the French had proceeded from their raſhneſs in giving battle, when no neceſſity obliged them to riſque a deciſive action; that this army was the laſt reſource of the King, and the only defence of the few provinces which remained to him; and that every reaſon invited him to embrace cautious councils, which left time for his ſubjects to return to their ſenſe of duty, and gave leiſure for diſcord to ariſe among his enemies, who, being united by no common band of intereſt or motive of alliance, could not long perſevere in their animoſity againſt him. All theſe prudential conſiderations were overborne by a vain point of honour, not to turn their backs to the enemy; and they reſolved to await the arrival of the duke of Bedford.

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THE numbers were nearly equal in this rencounter; and as the long continuance of the war had introduced diſcipline, which, however imperfect, ſufficed to maintain ſome appearance of order in ſuch ſmall armies, the battle was fierce, and well diſputed, and attended with

27th of Auguſt. Battle of Verneüil.

[a] Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 14. Graſton, p. 504.

bloodſhed

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bloodshed on both sides. The constable drew up his forces under the walls of Verneüil, and resolved to abide the attack of the enemy: But the impatience of the viscount of Narbonne, who broke his ranks, and obliged the whole line to follow him in some hurry and confusion, was the cause of the misfortune, which ensued. The English archers, fixing their palisadoes before them, according to their usual custom, sent a volley of arrows into the thickest of the French army; and tho' beat from their ground, and obliged to take shelter among the baggage, they soon rallied, and continued to commit great slaughter upon the enemy. The duke of Bedford, mean-while, at the head of the men at arms, made impression on the French, broke their ranks, chased them off the field, and rendered the victory entirely compleat and decisive [g]. The constable himself perished in battle, the earl of Douglas and his son, the counts of Aumale, Tonnerre and Ventadour, with many other considerable nobility. The duke of Alençon, the mareschal de la Fayette, the lords of Gaucour and Mortemar were taken prisoners. There fell about four thousand of the French; and sixteen hundred of the English; a loss then esteemed so unusual on the side of the victors, that the duke of Bedford prohibited all rejoicings for his success. Verneüil was surrendered next day upon capitulation [h].

The condition of the King of France appeared now very terrible, and almost desperate. He had lost the flower of his army and the bravest of his nobles in this fatal action: He had no resources for recruiting or subsisting his troops: He wanted money even for his personal subsistance; and tho' all parade of a court was banished, it was with difficulty he could keep a table, supplied with

[g] Hall, fol. 88, 89, 90. Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 15. Stowe, p. 365. Hollingshed, p. 588.

[h] Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 15.

the

the plaineſt neceſſaries, for himſelf and his few followers: Every day brought him intelligence of ſome loſs or misfortune: Towns, which were bravely defended, were obliged at laſt to ſurrender for want of relief or ſupply: He ſaw his partizans entirely chaced from all the provinces which lay north of the Loire: And he expected ſoon to loſe, by the united efforts of his enemies, all the territories, of which he had hitherto continued maſter; when an accident happened, which ſaved him on the brink of ruin, and loſt the Engliſh ſuch an opportunity for compleating their conqueſts, as they never afterwards were able to recall. CHAP. XX. 1424.

JAQUELINE, counteſs of Hainault and Holland, and heir of theſe provinces, had eſpouſed John duke of Brabant, couſin german to the duke of Burgundy; but having unhappily made this choice, from the uſual motives of princes, ſhe ſoon found reaſon to repent her of the unequal alliance. She was a princeſs of a maſculine ſpirit and uncommon underſtanding; the duke of Brabant was of a ſickly complexion and weak mind: She was in the vigour of her age; he had only reached his fifteenth year: Theſe cauſes had inſpired her with ſuch contempt of her huſband, which ſoon proceeded to antipathy, that ſhe determined to break a marriage, where, it is probable, nothing but the ceremony had as yet intervened. The court of Rome was commonly very open to applications of this nature, when ſeconded by power and money; but as the princeſs foreſaw great oppoſition from her huſband's relations, and was impatient to effect her purpoſe, ſhe made her eſcape into England, and threw herſelf under the protection of the duke of Gloceſter. That prince, with many noble qualities, had the defect of being governed by an impetuous temper and vehement paſſions; and he was raſhly induced, as well by the charms of the counteſs herſelf, as by the

proſpect

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prospect of possessing her rich inheritance, to offer himself to her as a husband. Without waiting for a papal dispensation; without endeavouring to reconcile the duke of Burgundy to this measure; he entered into a contract of marriage with Jaqueline, and immediately attempted to put himself in possession of her dominions. Philip was disgusted with so precipitant a conduct: He resented the injury done to the duke of Brabant his near relation: He dreaded to have the English established on all sides of him: And he foresaw the consequences, which must attend the extensive and uncontrouled dominion of that nation, if, before the full settlement of their power, they insulted and injured an ally, to whom they had already been so much indebted, and who was so necessary for supporting them in their farther progress. He encouraged, therefore, the duke of Brabant to make resistance: He engaged many of Jaqueline's subjects to adhere to that prince: He himself marched troops to his support: And as the duke of Gloucester still persevered in his purpose, a sharp war was suddenly kindled in the Low Countries. The quarrel soon became personal as well as political. The English prince wrote to the duke of Burgundy, complaining of the opposition made to his pretensions; and tho' in the main, he employed amicable terms in his letter, he took notice of some falshoods, into which, he said, Philip had been betrayed during the course of these transactions. This unguarded expression was highly resented: The duke of Burgundy insisted, that he should retract it: And mutual challenges and defiances passed between them on this occasion [i].

THE duke of Bedford could easily foresee the bad effects of so ill-timed and imprudent a quarrel. All the succours, which he expected from England, and which were so necessary in this critical emergence, were inter-

[i] Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 19, 20, 21.

cepted

cepted by his brother, and employed in Holland and Hainault: The forces of the duke of Burgundy, which he alſo depended on, were diverted by the ſame wars: And beſides this double loſs, he was in imminent danger of alienating for ever that confederate, whoſe friendſhip was of the utmoſt importance to his intereſts, and whom the late King had injoined him, with his dying breath, to gratify by every mark of regard and attachment. He inforced all theſe topics to the duke of Gloceſter: He endeavoured to mitigate the reſentment of the duke of Burgundy; He interpoſed with his good offices between theſe princes: But he was not ſucceſsful in any of his endeavours; and he found, that the impetuoſity of his brother's temper was ſtill the chief obſtacle to all accommodation [k]. For this reaſon, inſtead of puſhing the victory gained at Verneüil, he found himſelf obliged to take a journey into England, and to try, by his councils and authority, to moderate the meaſures of the duke of Gloceſter. CHAP. XX. 1424.

THERE had likewiſe broke out ſome differences among the Engliſh miniſtry, which had proceeded to great extremities, and which required the regent's preſence to compoſe them [l]. The biſhop of Wincheſter, to whom the care of the King's perſon and education had been entruſted, was a prelate of great capacity and experience, but of an intriguing and dangerous character; and as he aſpired to the government of affairs, he had continual diſputes with his nephew the protector, and he gained frequent advantages over the vehement and impolitic temper of that prince. The duke of Bedford employed the authority of parliament to reconcile them; and theſe rivals were obliged to promiſe before that aſ- 1425.

[k] Monſtrelet, p. 18. [l] Stowe, p. 368. Hollingſhed, p. 590.

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ſembly, that they would bury all quarrels in oblivion[m]. Time alſo ſeemed to open expedients for compoſing the difference with the duke of Burgundy. The credit of that prince had procured a bull from the Pope; by which not only Jaqueline's contract with the duke of Gloceſter was annulled; but it was alſo declared, that even in caſe of the duke of Brabant's death, it ſhould never be lawful for her to eſpouſe the Engliſh prince. Humphrey, deſpairing of ſucceſs, married another lady of inferior rank, who had lived ſome time with him, as his miſtreſs[n]. The duke of Brabant died; and his widow, before ſhe could recover poſſeſſion of her dominions, was obliged to declare the duke of Burgundy her heir, in caſe ſhe died without children, and to promiſe never to marry any perſon without his conſent. But tho' the affair was thus terminated to the advantage of Philip, it left a diſagreeable impreſſion on his mind: It excited an extreme jealouſy of the Engliſh, and opened his eyes to his true intereſts: And as nothing but his animoſity againſt Charles had engaged him in alliance with them, it counterbalanced that paſſion by another of the ſame kind, which in the end became prevalent, and brought him back, by degrees, to his natural connexions with his family and his native country.

About the ſame time, the duke of Brittany began to withdraw himſelf from the Engliſh alliance. His brother, the count de Richemont, tho' connected by marriage with the dukes of Burgundy and Bedford, was extremely attached by inclination to the French intereſt; and he willingly hearkened to all the advances which Charles made him for obtaining his friendſhip. The high office of conſtable, vacant by the earl of Buchan's

[m] Hall, fol. 98, 99. Hollingſhed, p. 593, 594. Polydore Virgil, p. 466. Grafton, p. 512. 519.

[n] Stowe, p. 367.

death,

death, was offered him; and as his martial and ambitious temper aspired to the command of armies, which he had in vain attempted to obtain from the duke of Bedford, he not only accepted that trust, but brought over his brother to an alliance with the French monarch. The new constable, having made this one change in his measures, firmly adhered ever after to his engagements with France. Tho' his pride and violence, which would admit of no rival in his master's confidence, and even prompted him to assassinate the other favourites, had so much disgusted Charles, that he once banished him the court, and refused to admit him to his presence, he still acted with vigour for the service of that monarch, and obtained at last, by his perseverance, the pardon of all his past offences. CHAP. XX. 1425.

In this situation, the duke of Bedford, on his return, found the affairs of France, after passing eight months in England. The duke of Burgundy was much disgusted. The duke of Brittany had entered into engagements with Charles, and had done homage to that prince for his dutchy. The French had been allowed to recover from the astonishment, into which their frequent disasters had thrown them. An incident even happened, which served extremely to raise their courage. The earl of Warwic had besieged Montargis with a small army of 3000 men, and the place was reduced to extremity, when the bastard of Orleans undertook to throw relief into it. This general, who was natural son to the prince assassinated by the duke of Burgundy, and who was afterwards created count de Dunois, conducted a body of 1600 men to Montargis; and made an attack on the enemy's trenches with so much valour, prudence, and good fortune, that he not only penetrated into the place, but gave a severe blow to the English, and obliged 1426.

Warwic

CHAP. XIX. 1426.

Warwic to raiſe the ſiege[n]. This was the firſt ſignal action, which raiſed the fame of Dunois, and opened him the road to all thoſe great honours, which he afterwards attained.

But the regent, ſoon after his arrival, revived the credit of the Engliſh arms, by an important enterprize, which he happily atchieved. He ſecretly brought together, in ſeparate detachments, a conſiderable army to the frontiers of Brittany; and fell ſo unexpectedly upon that province, that the duke, unable to make reſiſtance, yielded to all the terms required of him: He renounced the French alliance; he engaged to maintain the treaty of Troye; he acknowledged the duke of Bedford for regent of France; and promiſed to do homage for his dutchy to King Henry[o]. And the Engliſh prince, having thus freed himſelf from a dangerous enemy who lay behind him, reſolved on an undertaking, which, if ſucceſsful, would, he hoped, caſt the balance between the two nations, and prepare the way for the final conqueſt of France.

1428. Siege of Orleans.

The city of Orleans was ſo ſituated between the provinces commanded by Henry, and thoſe poſſeſſed by Charles, that it opened an eaſy entrance to either; and as the duke of Bedford intended to make a great effort to penetrate into the ſouth of France, it behoved him to begin with this place, which, in the preſent circumſtances, was become the moſt important in the kingdom. He committed the conduct of the enterprize to the earl of Saliſbury, who had newly brought him over a reinforcement of 6000 men from England, and who had much diſtinguiſhed himſelf, by his abilities, during the courſe of the preſent wars. Saliſbury, paſſing the Loire, made

[n] Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 32, 33. Hollingſhed, p. 597.
[o] Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 35, 36.

himſelf

himself master of several small places, which surrounded Orleans on that side [p]; and as his intentions were thereby known, the French King used every expedient to supply the city with a garrison and provisions, and enable it to maintain a long and obstinate siege. The lord of Gaucour, a brave and experienced captain, was appointed governor: Many officers of distinction threw themselves into the place: The troops, which they conducted, were enured to war, and were determined to make the most obstinate resistance: And even the inhabitants, disciplined by the long continuance of hostilities, were well qualified, in their own defence, to second the efforts of the most veteran forces. The eyes of all Europe were turned towards this scene; where, it was reasonably supposed, the French were to make their last stand for maintaining the independance of their monarchy, and the rights of their sovereign.

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The earl of Salisbury at last approached the place with an army, which consisted only of 10,000 men; and not being able, with so small a force, to invest so great a city, that commanded a bridge over the Loire, he stationed himself on the southern side towards Sologne, leaving the other, towards the Beausse, still open to the enemy. He there attacked the fortifications, which guarded the entry to the bridge; and after an obstinate resistance, he carried several of them: But was himself killed by a cannon ball as he was taking a view of the enemy [q]. The earl of Suffolk succeeded to the command; and being re-inforced with great numbers of English and Burgundians, he passed the river with the main body of his army, and invested Orleans on the other side. As it was now the depth of winter, Suffolk,

[p] Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 38, 39. Polyd. Virg. p. 468.

[q] Hall, fol. 105. Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 39. Stowe, p. 369. Hollingshed, p. 599. Grafton, p. 531.

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1428. who found it difficult, in that ſeaſon, to throw up intrenchments all around, contented himſelf, for the preſent, with erecting redoubts at different diſtances, where his men were lodged in ſafety, and were ready to intercept the ſupplies, which the enemy might attempt to throw into the place. Tho' he had ſeveral pieces of artillery in his camp, (and this is the firſt ſiege in Europe, where cannon were found to be of importance) the art of engineering was hitherto ſo imperfect, that Suffolk truſted more to famine than force for ſubduing the city; and he propoſed in the ſpring to render the circumvallation more compleat, by drawing intrenchments from one redoubt to another. Numberleſs feats of valour were performed both by the beſiegers and beſieged during this winter: Bold ſallies were made, and repulſed with equal boldneſs: Convoys were ſometimes introduced and often intercepted: The ſupplies were ſtill unequal to the conſumption of the place: And the Engliſh ſeemed daily, tho' ſlowly, to be advancing towards the completion of their enterprize.

1429. But while they lay in this ſituation, the French parties ravaged all the country around; and the beſiegers, who were obliged to draw their proviſions from a diſtance, were themſelves expoſed to the danger of want and famine. Sir John Faſtolffe was bringing up a large convoy, of every kind of ſtores, which he eſcorted with a detachment of 2,500 men; when he was attacked by a body of 4000 French, under the command of the counts of Clermont and Dunois. Faſtolffe drew up behind his waggons; but the French generals, cautious of attacking him in that poſture, planted a battery of cannon againſt him, which threw every thing into confuſion, and would have enſured them the victory; had not the impatience of ſome Scots troops, who

broke the line of battle, brought on an engagement, in which Faſtolffe was victorious. The count de Dunois was wounded; and above 500 French were left on the field of battle. This action, which was of great importance in the preſent conjuncture, was commonly called the battle of *Herrings*; becauſe the convoy brought a great quantity of that kind of proviſions, for the uſe of the Engliſh army during the Lent ſeaſon [r]. CHAP. XX. 1429.

CHARLES ſeemed now to have but one expedient for ſaving this city, which had been ſo long inveſted. The duke of Orleans, who was ſtill priſoner in England, prevailed on the protector and the council to conſent, that all his demeſnes ſhould be allowed to preſerve a neutrality during the war, and ſhould be ſequeſtered, for greater ſecurity, into the hands of the duke of Burgundy. This prince, who was much leſs cordial in the Engliſh intereſts than formerly, went to Paris, and made the propoſal to the duke of Bedford; but the regent replied very coldly, that he was not of a humour to beat the buſhes, while others ran away with the game: An anſwer, which ſo much diſguſted the duke, that he recalled all the troops of Burgundy, that acted in the ſiege [s]. The place, however, was every day more and more cloſely inveſted by the Engliſh: Great ſcarcity began already to be felt by the garriſon and inhabitants: Charles, in deſpair of collecting an army, which ſhould dare to approach the enemy's entrenchments, not only gave the city for loſt, but began to entertain a very diſmal proſpect with regard to the general ſtate of his affairs. He ſaw that the country, in which he had hitherto, with great difficulty, ſubſiſted, would be laid entirely open to the

[r] Hall, fol. 106. Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 41, 42. Stowe, p. 369. Hollingſhed, p. 600. Polyd. Virg. p. 469. Grafton, p. 532.

[s] Hall, fol. 106. Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 42. Stowe, p. 369. Grafton, p. 533.

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invasion of a powerful and victorious enemy; and he talked already of retiring with the remains of his forces into Languedoc and Dauphiny, and of defending himself as long as possible in those distant provinces. But it was fortunate for this good prince, that he lay under the dominion of women; and that the women, whom he consulted, had the spirit to support his sinking resolutions in this desperate extremity. Mary of Anjou, his Queen, a princess of great merit and prudence, vehemently opposed this measure, which, she foresaw, would discourage all his partizans, and serve as a general signal for deserting a prince, who seemed himself to despair of success. His mistress too, the fair Agnes Sorel, who lived in entire amity with the Queen, seconded all her remonstrances, and threatened, that, if he thus pusillanimously threw away the scepter of France, she would seek in the court of England a fortune more correspondent to her wishes. Love was able to rouze in the breast of Charles that courage, which ambition had failed to excite: He resolved to dispute every inch of ground with an imperious enemy; and rather to perish with honour in the midst of his friends than yield ingloriously to his bad fortune: When relief was unexpectedly brought him by another female of a very different character, who gave rise to one of the most singular revolutions, that is to be met with in history.

The maid of Orleans.

In the village of Domremi near Vaucouleurs, on the borders of Lorraine, there lived a country girl of twenty-seven years of age, called Joan d'Arc, who was servant in a small inn, and who in that station had been accustomed to tend the horses of the guests, to ride them without a saddle to the watering-place, and to perform other offices, which, in well-frequented inns, commonly fall to the share of the men servants[1]. This girl was of

[1] Hall, fol. 107. Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 42. Grafton, p. 534.

an irreproachable life, and had not hitherto been remarked for any singularity; whether that she had met with no occasion to excite her genius, or that the unskilful eyes of those, who conversed with her, had not been able to discern her uncommon merit. It is easy to imagine, that the present situation of France was an interesting object even to persons of the lowest rank, and would become the frequent subject of their conversation: A young prince, expelled his native throne, by the sedition of subjects and by the arms of strangers, could not fail to move the compassion of all his people, whose hearts were uncorrupted by faction; and the peculiar character of Charles, so strongly inclined to friendship and the tender passions, naturally rendered him the hero of that sex, whose generous minds know no bounds in their affections. The siege of Orleans, the progress of the English before that place, the great distress of the garrison and inhabitants, the importance of saving this city and its brave defenders, had turned thither the eyes of all the world; and Joan, inflamed by the general sentiment, was seized with a wild desire of bringing relief to her sovereign in his present distresses. Her unexperienced mind, working day and night on this favourite object, mistook the impulses of her passion for heavenly inspirations; and she fancied, that she saw visions, and heard voices, exhorting her to re-establish the throne of France, and to expel the foreign invaders. An uncommon intrepidity of temper made her overlook all the dangers, which might attend her in such a path; and thinking herself destined by heaven to this office, she threw aside that bashfulness and timidity, which would naturally adhere to her sex, her years, and her low station. She went to Vaucouleurs; procured admission to Baudricourt, the governor; informed him of her inspirations and intentions; and conjured him not to neglect

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the voice of God, who ſpoke thro' her, but to ſecond thoſe heavenly revelations, which impelled her to this glorious enterprize. Baudricourt treated her at firſt with ſome neglect; but on her frequent returns to him, and importunate ſolicitations, he began to remark ſomething extraordinary in the maid, and was inclined, at all hazards, to make ſo eaſy an experiment. It is uncertain, whether this gentleman had diſcernment enough to perceive, that great uſe might be made with the vulgar of ſo uncommon an engine; or, what is more likely in that credulous age, was himſelf a convert to this viſionary: But he adopted at laſt the ſcheme of Joan; and he gave her ſome attendants, who conducted her to the French court, which at that time reſided at Chinon.

It is the buſineſs of hiſtory to diſtinguiſh between the *miraculous* and the *marvellous*; to reject the firſt in all narrations merely profane and human; to ſcruple the ſecond; and when obliged by undoubted teſtimony, as in the preſent caſe, to admit of ſomething extraordinary, to receive as little of it as is conſiſtent with the known facts and circumſtances. It is pretended, that Joan, immediately on her admiſſion, knew the King, tho' ſhe had never ſeen his face before, and tho' he purpoſely kept himſelf in the crowd of courtiers, and had laid aſide every thing in his dreſs and apparel, which might diſtinguiſh him: That ſhe offered him, in the name of the ſupreme Creator, to raiſe the ſiege of Orleans, and conduct him to Rheims to be there crowned and anointed; and on his expreſſing ſome doubts of her miſſion, revealed to him, before ſome ſworn confidents, a ſecret, which was unknown to all the world but himſelf, and which nothing but a heavenly inſpiration could diſcover to her: And that ſhe demanded, as the inſtrument of her future victories, a particular ſword, which was kept

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in the church of St. Catharine de Fierbois, and which, tho' ſhe had never ſeen it, ſhe deſcribed by all its marks, and by the place in which it had long been laid and neglected [u]. This is certain, that all theſe miraculous ſtories were ſpread abroad, in order to catch the vulgar. The more the King and his miniſters were determined to give into the illuſion, the more ſcruples they pretended. An aſſembly of grave doctors and theologians cautiouſly examined Joan's miſſion, and pronounced it undoubted and ſupernatural. She was ſent to the parliament, then reſiding at Poictiers; and was interrogated before that aſſembly: The preſidents, the counſellors, who came perſuaded of her impoſture, went away convinced of her inſpiration. A ray of hope began to break thro' that deſpair, in which the minds of all men were before enveloped. Heaven had now declared itſelf in favour of France, and had laid bare its out-ſtretched arm to take vengeance on her invaders. Few could diſtinguiſh between the impulſe of inclination and the force of conviction; and none would ſubmit to the trouble of ſo diſagreeable a ſcrutiny.

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After theſe artificial precautions and preparations had been for ſome time employed, Joan's requeſts were at laſt complied with: She was armed cap-a-pee, mounted on horſeback, and ſhown in that martial habiliment before the whole people. Her dexterity in managing her ſteed, tho' acquired in her former occupation, was regarded as a new proof of her miſſion; and ſhe was received with the loudeſt acclamations by the ſpectators. Her former occupation was even denied: She was no longer the ſervant of an inn. She was converted into a ſhepherdeſs, an employment much more agreeable to the imagination. To render her ſtill more intereſting,

[u] Hall, fol. 107. Hollingſhed, p. 620.

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near ten years were ſubtracted from her age; and all the ſentiments of love and of chivalry, were thus united to thoſe of enthuſiaſm, in order to inflame the fond fancy of the people with prepoſſeſſions in her favour.

When the engine was thus dreſſed up in full ſplendor, it was time to eſſay its force againſt the enemy. Joan was ſent to Blois, where a large convoy was prepared for the ſupply of Orleans, and an army of ten thouſand men, under the command of St. Severe, aſſembled to eſcort it. She ordered all the ſoldiers to confeſs themſelves before they ſet out on the enterprize: She baniſhed from the camp all women of bad fame: She diſplayed in her hands a conſecrated banner; where the Supreme Being was repreſented, graſping the globe of earth, and ſurrounded with flower de luces. And ſhe inſiſted, in right of her prophetic miſſion, that the convoy ſhould enter Orleans, by the direct road from the ſide of Beauſſe; but the count de Dunois, unwilling to ſubmit the rules of the military art to her inſpirations, ordered it to approach by the other ſide of the river, where, he knew, the weakeſt part of the Engliſh army was ſtationed.

Previous to this attempt, the maid had wrote to the regent and to the Engliſh generals before Orleans, commanding them, in the name of the omnipotent Creator, by whom ſhe was commiſſioned, immediately to raiſe the ſiege and to evacuate France; and menacing them with divine vengeance in caſe of their diſobedience. All the Engliſh affected to ſpeak with deriſion of the maid and of her heavenly commiſſion; and ſaid, that the French King was now indeed reduced to a ſorry paſs, when he had recourſe to ſuch ridiculous expedients: But they felt their imagination ſecretly ſtruck with the vehement perſuaſion, which prevailed in all around them; and they waited with an anxious expectation,

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not unmixed with horror, for the issue of these extraordinary preparations. CHAP. XX.

As the convoy approached the river, a sally was made by the garrison on the side of Beausse, to prevent the English general from sending any detachment to the other side: The provisions were peaceably embarked in boats, which the inhabitants of Orleans had sent to receive them: The maid covered with her troops the embarkation: Suffolk ventured not to attack her: And the French general carried back the army in safety to Blois; an alteration of affairs, which was already visible to all the world, and which had a proportional effect on the minds of both parties. 1429. 29th April.

The maid entered the town of Orleans, arrayed in her military garb, and displaying her consecrated standard; and was received, as a celestial deliverer, by all the inhabitants. They now believed themselves invincible under her sacred influence; and Dunois himself, perceiving such a mighty alteration both in friends and foes, consented, that the next convoy, which was expected in a few days, should enter by the side of Beausse. The convoy approached: No sign of resistance appeared in the besiegers: The waggons and troops passed without interruption between the redoubts of the English: A dead silence and astonishment reigned among those troops, formerly so elated with victory, and so fierce for the combat. 4th May.

The earl of Suffolk was in a situation very unusual and extraordinary; and which might well confound the man of the greatest capacity and firmest temper. He saw his troops overawed, and strongly impressed with the idea of a divine influence, accompanying the maid. Instead of banishing these vain terrors by hurry and action and war, he waited till the soldiers should recover from the panic; and he thereby gave leisure for these prepossessions

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ſeſſions to ſink ſtill deeper into their minds. The military maxims, which are prudent in common caſes, deceived him in theſe unaccountable events. The Engliſh felt their courage daunted and overwhelmed; and thence inferred a divine vengeance hanging over them. The French drew the ſame inference from an inactivity ſo new and unexpected. Every circumſtance was now reverſed in the opinions of men, on which all depends: The ſpirit, reſulting from a long courſe of uninterrupted ſucceſs, was on a ſudden transferred from the victors to the vanquiſhed.

THE maid called aloud, that the garriſon ſhould remain no longer on the defenſive; and ſhe promiſed her followers the aſſiſtance of heaven in attacking thoſe redoubts of the enemy, which had ſo long kept them in awe, and which they had never hitherto dared to inſult. The generals ſeconded her ardour: An attack was made on one redoubt, and it proved ſucceſsful [x]: All the Engliſh, who defended the entrenchments, were put to the ſword or taken priſoners: And Sir John Talbot himſelf, who had drawn together, from the other redoubts, ſome troops to bring them relief, dared not to appear in the open field againſt ſo formidable an enemy.

NOTHING ſeemed impoſſible after this ſucceſs to the Maid and her enthuſiaſtic votaries. She urged the generals to attack the main body of the Engliſh in their entrenchments: But Dunois, ſtill unwilling to hazard the fate of France by too great temerity, and ſenſible that the leaſt reverſe of fortune would make all the preſent viſions evaporate, and reſtore every thing to its former condition, checked her vehemence, and propoſed to her firſt to expel the enemy from their forts on the other ſide of the river, and thus lay the communication

[x] Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 45.

with

with the country entirely open, before ſhe attempted any more hazardous enterprize. Joan was perſuaded, and theſe forts were vigorouſly aſſailed. In one attack the French were repulſed; the maid was left almoſt alone; ſhe was obliged to retreat, and join the runaways; but diſplaying her ſacred ſtandard, and animating them with her countenance, her geſtures, her exhortations, ſhe led them back to the charge, and overpowered the Engliſh in their entrenchments. In the attack of another fort, ſhe was wounded in the neck with an arrow; ſhe retreated a moment behind the aſſailants; ſhe pulled out the arrow with her own hands; ſhe had the wound quickly dreſſed; and ſhe haſtened back to head the troops, and to plant her victorious banner on the ramparts of the enemy. CHAP. XX. 1429.

By all theſe ſucceſſes, the Engliſh were entirely chaced from their fortifications on that ſide: They had loſt above ſix thouſand men in theſe different actions; and what was ſtill more important, their wonted courage and confidence was wholly gone, and had given place to amazement and deſpair. The Maid returned triumphant over the bridge, and was again received as the guardian angel of the city. After performing ſuch miracles, ſhe convinced the moſt obdurate incredulity of her divine miſſion: Men felt themſelves animated as by a ſuperior energy, and thought nothing impoſſible to that divine hand, which ſo viſibly conducted them. It was in vain even for the Engliſh generals to oppoſe with their ſoldiers the prevailing opinion of ſupernatural influence: They themſelves were probably moved with the ſame belief: The utmoſt they dared to advance, was, that Joan was not an inſtrument of God; ſhe was only the implement of the Devil: But as the Engliſh had felt, to their ſad experience, that the Devil might be allowed ſometimes to prevail, they derived not much conſolation from the enforcing of this opinion.

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1429. The siege of Orleans raised. 8th May.

It might prove extremely dangerous for Suffolk, with such intimidated troops, to remain any longer in the presence of such a courageous and victorious enemy; and he therefore raised the siege, and retreated with all the precautions imaginable. The French resolved to push their conquests, and to allow the English no leisure to recover from their consternation. Charles formed a body of six thousand men, and sent them to attack Jergeau, whither Suffolk had retired with a detachment of his army. The siege lasted ten days; and the place was obstinately defended. Joan displayed her wonted intrepidity on this occasion. She descended into the fossee, in leading the attack; and she there received a blow on the head with a stone, by which she was confounded and beat to the ground: But she soon recovered herself; and in the end rendered the assault successful: Suffolk was obliged to yield himself prisoner to a Frenchman called Renaud; but before he submitted, he asked his adversary, whether he was a gentleman. On receiving a satisfactory answer, he demanded, whether he was a knight. Renaud replied, that he had not yet attained that honour. *Then I make you one*, replied Suffolk: Upon which, he gave him the blow with his sword, which dubbed him into that fraternity; and he immediately surrendered himself his prisoner.

The remainder of the English army was commanded by Fastolffe, Scales and Talbot, who thought of nothing but of making their retreat, as soon as possible, into a place of safety; while the French esteemed the overtaking them equivalent to a victory. So much had the events, which passed before Orleans, altered every thing between the two nations! The vanguard of the French under Xaintrailles attacked the rear of the enemy at the village
18th June. of Patay. The battle lasted not a moment: The English were discomfited and fled: The brave Fastolffe himself

self showed the example of flight to his troops; and the order of the garter was taken from him, as a punishment for this instance of cowardice [a]. Two thousand men were killed in this action; and both Talbot and Scales taken prisoners. CHAP. XX. 1429.

In the account of all these successes, the French writers, to magnify the wonder, represent the maid (who was now known by the appellation of *the Maid of Orleans*) as not only active in the combats, but as performing the office of general; directing the troops, conducting the military operations, and swaying the deliberations in all councils of war. It is certain, that the policy of the French court endeavoured to maintain this appearance with the public: But it is much more probable, that Dunois and the wiser commanders prompted her in all her measures, than that a country girl, without experience or education, could, on a sudden, become expert in a profession, which requires more genius and capacity, than any other active scene of life. It is sufficient praise, that she could distinguish the persons on whose judgment she might rely; that she could seize their hints and suggestions, and, on a sudden, deliver their opinion as her own; and that she could curb, on occasion, that visionary and enthusiastic spirit, with which she was undoubtedly actuated, and could temper it with prudence and discretion.

The raising of the siege of Orleans was one part of the Maid's promise to Charles: The crowning him at Rheims was the other: And she now insisted vehemently, that he should forthwith set out on that enterprize. A few weeks before, such a proposal would have appeared the most extravagant in the world. Rheims lay in a distant quarter of the kingdom; was then in the hands

[a] Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 46.

of

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of a victorious enemy; the whole road, which led to it, was occupied by their garriſons; and no imagination could be ſo ſanguine as to think, that ſuch an attempt could ſo ſoon come within the bounds of poſſibility. But as it was extremely the intereſt of Charles to maintain the belief of ſomething extraordinary and divine in theſe events, and to avail himſelf of the preſent conſternation of the Engliſh; he reſolved to follow the exhortations of his warlike propheteſs, and to lead his army upon this promiſing adventure. Hitherto, he had kept remote from the ſcene of war: As the ſafety of the ſtate depended entirely upon his perſon, he had been perſuaded to reſtrain his military ardour: But obſerving this proſperous turn of affairs, he now determined to appear at the head of his armies, and to ſet the example of valour to all his ſoldiers. And the French nobility ſaw at once their young ſovereign aſſuming a new and more brilliant character, ſeconded by fortune, and conducted by the hand of heaven; and they caught freſh zeal to exert themſelves in replacing him on the throne of his anceſtors.

The King of France crowned at Rheims.

CHARLES ſet out for Rheims at the head of twelve thouſand men: He paſſed by Troye, which opened its gates to him: Chalons imitated the example: Rheims ſent him a deputation with its keys, before his approach to it: And he ſcarce perceived, as he paſſed along, that he was marching thro' an enemy's country. The cere-

17th July.

mony of his coronation was here performed [b] with the holy oil, which a pigeon had brought to King Clovis from heaven, on the firſt eſtabliſhment of the French monarchy: The maid of Orleans ſtood by his ſide, in compleat armour, and diſplaying her ſacred banner, which had ſo often diſſipated and confounded his fierceſt

[b] Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 48.

enemies:

enemies: And the people shouted with the most unfeigned joy, on viewing such a complication of wonders. After the completion of the ceremony, the Maid threw herself at the King's feet, embraced his knees, and with a flood of tears, which pleasure and tenderness extorted from her, she congratulated him on this singular and marvellous event. CHAP. XX. 1429.

CHARLES, thus crowned and anointed, became more venerable in the eyes of all his subjects, and seemed, in a manner, to receive anew, from a heavenly commission, his title to their allegiance. The inclinations of men swaying their belief, no one doubted of the inspirations and prophetic spirit of the Maid: So many incidents, which passed all human comprehension, left little room to question a superior influence: And the real and undoubted facts gave credit to every exaggeration, which could scarce be rendered more wonderful. Laon, Soissons, Chateau-Thierri, Provins, and many other towns and fortresses in that neighbourhood, immediately after Charles's coronation, submitted to him on the first summons; and the whole nation was disposed to give him the most zealous testimonies of their duty and affection.

Prudence of the duke of Bedford.

NOTHING can impress us with a higher idea of the wisdom, address, and resolution of the duke of Bedford, than his being able to maintain himself in so perilous a situation, and to preserve some footing in France, after the defection of so many places, and amidst the universal inclination of the rest to imitate that contagious example. This prince seemed present every where by his vigilance and foresight: He employed each resource, which fortune had yet left him: He held all the English garrisons in a posture of defence: He kept a watchful eye over every attempt among the French towards an insurrection: He retained the Parisians in obedience, by employing alternately caresses and severity: And knowing

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knowing that the duke of Burgundy was already wavering in his fidelity, he acted with so much skill and prudence, as to renew, in this dangerous crisis, an alliance, which was so important to the credit and support of the English government.

The small supplies which he received from England set the talents of this great man in still a stronger light. The ardour of the English for foreign conquests was now extremely abated by time and reflection: The parliament seems even to have become sensible of the danger, which might attend their farther progress: No supply of money could be obtained by the regent during his greatest distresses; and men inlisted slowly under his standard, or soon deserted, by reason of the wonderful accounts, which had reached England, of the magic, and sorcery, and diabolical power of the maid of Orleans [c]. It happened fortunately, in this emergency, that the bishop of Winchester, now created a cardinal, landed at Calais with a body of 5000 men, which he was conducting into Bohemia, on a crusade against the Hussites. He was persuaded to lend these troops to his nephew during the present difficulties [d]; and the regent was thereby enabled to take the field, and to oppose the French King, who was advancing with his army to the gates of Paris.

The extraordinary capacity of the duke of Bedford appeared also in his military operations. He attempted to restore the courage of his troops by boldly advancing to the face of the enemy; but he chose his posts with so much caution, as always to decline a combat, and to render it impossible for Charles to attack him. He still attended that prince in all his movements; covered his own towns and garrisons; and kept himself in a posture to reap advantage from every imprudence or false step of

[c] Rymer, vol. x. p. 459. 472.

[d] Ibid. vol. x. p. 421.

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the enemy. The French army, which conſiſted moſtly of volunteers, who ſerved at their own expence, ſoon after retired and was diſſolved: Charles went to Bourges, the ordinary place of his reſidence; but not till he made himſelf maſter of Compiegne, Beauvais, Senlis, Sens, Laval, Lagni, St. Denis, and of many places in the neighbourhood of Paris, which the affections of the people had put into his hands. CHAP. XX. 1429.

THE regent endeavoured to revive the declining ſtate of his affairs, by bringing over the young King of England, and having him crowned and acknowledged King of France at Paris [e]. All the vaſſals of the crown, who lived within the provinces poſſeſſed by the Engliſh, ſwore anew allegiance and did homage to him. But this ceremony was cold and inſipid in compariſon of the eclat which had attended the coronation of Charles at Rheims; and the duke of Bedford expected more effect from an accident, which put into his hands the perſon, who had been the author of all his calamities. 1430.

THE maid of Orleans, after the coronation of Charles, declared to the count de Dunois, that her wiſhes were now ſatisfied, and that ſhe had no farther deſire than to return to her former condition, and to the occupations and courſe of life, which became her ſex: But that nobleman, ſenſible of the mighty advantages, which might ſtill be reaped from her preſence in the army, exhorted her to perſevere, till, by the final expulſion of the Engliſh, ſhe had brought all her prophecies to their full completion. In purſuance of this advice, ſhe threw herſelf into the town of Compiegne, which was at that time beſieged by the duke of Burgundy, aſſiſted by the earls of Arundel and Suffolk; and the garriſon on her

[e] Rymer, vol. x. p. 432.

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appearance believed themſelves thenceforth invincible. But their joy was of ſhort duration. The Maid, next day after her arrival, headed a ſally upon the quarters of

1430. 25th May. John de Luxembourg; ſhe twice drove the enemy from their entrenchments; finding their numbers to encreaſe every moment, ſhe ordered a retreat; when hard preſſed by the purſuers, ſhe turned upon them, and made them again recoil; but being here deſerted by her friends, and ſurrounded by the enemy, ſhe was at laſt, after exerting the utmoſt valour, taken priſoner by the Burgundians[f]. The common opinion was, that the French officers, finding the merit of every victory aſcribed to her, had, in envy to her renown, by which they themſelves were ſo much eclipſed, willingly expoſed her to this fatal accident.

THE envy of her friends on this occaſion was not a greater proof of her merit than the triumph of her enemies. A complete victory would not have given more joy to the Engliſh and their partizans. The ſervice of *Te Deum*, which has ſo often been prophaned by princes, was publicly celebrated on this fortunate event at Paris. The duke of Bedford fancied, that, by the captivity of that extraordinary woman, who had blaſted all his ſucceſſes, he would again recover his former aſcendant over France; and to puſh farther the preſent advantage, he purchaſed the captive from John de Luxembourg, and formed a proſecution againſt her, which, whether it proceeded from vengeance or policy, was equally barbarous, and diſhonourable.

1431. THERE was no poſſible reaſon, why Joan ſhould not be regarded as a priſoner of war, and be entitled to all the courteſy and good uſage, which civilized nations

[f] Stowe, p. 371.

practiſe towards enemies on theſe occaſions. She had never, in her military capacity, forfeited, by any act of treachery or cruelty, her claim to that treatment: She was unſtained with any civil crime: Even the virtues and the very decorums of her ſex had ever been rigidly obſerved by her [g]: And tho' her appearing in war, and leading armies to battle, may ſeem an exception, ſhe had thereby performed ſuch ſignal ſervice to her prince, that ſhe had abundantly compenſated for this irregularity; and was even, on that very account, the more an object of praiſe and admiration. It was neceſſary, therefore, for the duke of Bedford to intereſt religion ſome way in the proſecution; and to cover under that cloak his flagrant violation of juſtice and humanity.

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The biſhop of Beauvais, a man wholly devoted to the Engliſh intereſt, preſented a petition againſt Joan, on pretence, that ſhe was taken within the bounds of his dioceſe, and he deſired to have her tried by an eccleſiaſtical court for ſorcery, impiety, idolatry and magic; The univerſity of Paris was ſo mean as to join in the ſame requeſt: Several prelates, among whom the cardinal of Wincheſter was the only Engliſhman, were appointed her judges: They held their court in Roüen, where the young King of England then reſided: And the Maid, cloathed in her former military apparel, but loaded with irons, was produced before this tribunal.

[g] We learn from her trial in Paſquier, that when accuſed of having put to death Franquet d'Arras her priſoner, ſhe juſtified herſelf by ſaying, that he was a known robber, and lay under ſentence of death by a civil magiſtrate. She was ſo careful of obſerving decorums, that, when ſhe was in any town or garriſon, ſhe always went to bed with ſome women of character in the place: When in the camp, ſhe lay in armour, and always had one of her brothers on each ſide of her. The Engliſh never reproached her with any thing in regard to her morals.

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She firſt deſired to be eaſed of her chains: Her judges anſwered that ſhe had once already attempted an eſcape by throwing herſelf from a tower: She confeſſed the fact, maintained the juſtice of her intention, and owned, that, if ſhe could, ſhe would ſtill execute that purpoſe. All her other ſpeeches ſhowed the ſame firmneſs and intrepidity: Tho' harraſſed with interrogatories, during near the courſe of four months, ſhe never betrayed any weakneſs or womaniſh ſubmiſſion; and no advantage was gained over her. The point, which her judges puſhed moſt vehemently, was her viſions and revelations and intercourſe with departed ſaints; and they aſked her, whether ſhe would ſubmit to the church the truth of theſe inſpirations: She replied, that ſhe would ſubmit them to God, the fountain of truth. They then exclaimed, that ſhe was a heretic, and denied the authority of the church. She appealed to the Pope: They rejected her appeal.

They aſked her, why ſhe put truſt in her ſtandard which had been conſecrated by magical incantations: She replied, that ſhe put truſt in the Supreme Being alone, whoſe image was impreſſed upon it. They demanded, why ſhe carried in her hand that ſtandard at the anointment and coronation of Charles at Rheims: She anſwered, that the perſon, who had ſhared the danger, was entitled to ſhare the glory. When accuſed of going to war contrary to the decorums of her ſex, and of aſſuming government and command over men; ſhe ſcrupled not to reply, that her ſole purpoſe was to defeat the Engliſh, and to expel them from the kingdom of France. In the iſſue, ſhe was condemned for all the crimes of which ſhe had been accuſed, aggravated by hereſy; her revelations were declared to be inventions of the devil to delude the people; and ſhe was ſentenced to be delivered over to the ſecular arm.

Joan,

JOAN, ſo long ſurrounded by inveterate enemies, who treated her with every mark of contumely; brow-beaten and overawed by men of ſuperior rank, and men inveſted with the enſigns of a ſacred character, which ſhe had been accuſtomed to revere; felt her ſpirit at laſt ſubdued, and thoſe viſionary dreams of inſpiration, in which ſhe had been buoyed up by the triumphs of ſucceſs and the applauſes of her own party, gave way to the terrors of that puniſhment to which ſhe was ſentenced. She publicly declared herſelf willing to recant; ſhe acknowledged the illuſion of thoſe revelations which the church had rejected; and ſhe promiſed never more to maintain them. Her ſentence was then mitigated: She was condemned to perpetual impriſonment, and to be fed during life on bread and water. CHAP. XX. 1431.

ENOUGH was now done to fulfil all political views, and to convince both the French and the Engliſh, that the opinion of divine influence, which had ſo much encouraged the one and daunted the other, was entirely without foundation. But the barbarous vengeance of Joan's enemies was not ſatisfied with this victory. Suſpecting, that the female dreſs, which ſhe had now conſented to wear, was diſagreeable to her, they purpoſely placed in her apartment a ſuit of men's apparel; and watched for the effect of that temptation upon her. On the ſight of a dreſs, in which ſhe had acquired ſo much renown, and which ſhe once believed, ſhe wore by the particular appointment of heaven, all her former ideas and paſſions revived; and ſhe ventured in her ſolitude to cloath herſelf again in the forbidden garment. Her inſidious enemies caught her in that ſituation: Her fault was interpreted to be no leſs than a relapſe into hereſy: No recantation would now ſuffice, and no pardon could be granted her. She was condemned to be burned in the market-place of Roüen; and the infamous ſentence

CHAP. XX.

1431. Execution of the maid of Orleans, 14th June.

was accordingly executed. This admirable heroine, to whom the more generous ſuperſtition of the antients would have erected altars, was, on pretence of hereſy and magic, delivered over alive to the flames, and expiated by that dreadful puniſhment the ſignal ſervices, which ſhe had rendered to her prince and to her native country.

1432. THE affairs of the Engliſh, far from being advanced by this execution, went every day more and more to decay: The great abilities of the regent were unable to reſiſt the ſtrong inclination, which had ſeized the French to return under the obedience of their rightful ſovereign, and which that act of cruelty was ill fitted to remove. Chartres was ſurprized by a ſtratagem of the count de Dunois: A body of the Engliſh, under lord Willoughby, was defeated at St. Celerin upon the Sarte [h]: The fair in the ſuburbs of Caën, ſeated in the midſt of the Engliſh territories, was pillaged by de Lore, a French captain of reputation: The duke of Bedford himſelf was obliged by Dunois to raiſe the ſiege of Lagni with ſome diſhonour; And all theſe misfortunes, tho' light, yet being continued and uninterrupted, brought diſcredit to the Engliſh, and menaced them with an approaching loſs of all their conqueſts. But the chief detriment, which the regent ſuſtained, was by the death of his dutcheſs, who had hitherto preſerved ſome appearance of friendſhip between him and her brother, the duke of Burgundy [i]; And his marriage ſoon afterwards, with Jaqueline of Luxembourg, was the beginning of a breach between them [k]. Philip complained, that the regent had never had the civility to inform him of his intentions, and that ſo ſudden a marriage was a ſlight on his ſiſter's memory. The cardinal of Wincheſter mediated a recon-

[h] Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 100.
[i] Ibid. vol. ii. p. 87.
[k] Stowe, p. 373. Graſton, p. 554.

ciliation

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1432.

ciliation between these princes, and brought them both to St. Omers for that purpose. The duke of Bedford here expected the first visit both as he was son, brother, and uncle to a King, and because he had already made such advances as to come into the duke of Burgundy's territories, in order to have an interview with him: But Philip, proud of his great power and independant dominions, refused to pay this compliment to the regent: And the two princes, unable to adjust the ceremonial, parted without seeing each other[1]. A very bad prognostic of their cordial intentions to renew past friendship and amity!

Defection of the duke of Burgundy.

NOTHING could be more repugnant to the interests of the house of Burgundy, than to unite the crowns of France and England on the same head; an event, which, had it taken place, would have reduced the duke to the rank of a petty prince, and have rendered his situation entirely dependant and precarious. The title also to the crown of France, which, after the failure of the elder branches, might accrue to the duke or his posterity, had been sacrificed by the treaty of Troye; and strangers and enemies were thereby irrevocably fixed upon the throne. Revenge alone had carried Philip into these impolitic measures; and a point of honour had hitherto induced him to maintain them. But as it is the nature of passion gradually to decay; while the sense of interest maintains an eternal influence and authority; the duke had, for some years, appeared sensibly to relent in his animosity against Charles, and to hearken willingly to the apologies made by that prince for the murder of the late duke of Burgundy. His extreme youth was pleaded in his favour; his incapacity to judge for himself; the ascendant gained over him by his ministers; and his in-

[1] Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 90. Grafton, p. 561.

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ability to reſent a deed, which, without his knowledge, had been perpetrated by thoſe under whoſe guidance he

1432. was then placed. The more to gratify the pride of Philip, the King of France had baniſhed from his court and preſence Tanegui de Chatel, and all thoſe concerned in that aſſaſſination; and had offered to make any other atonement, which could be required of him. The ills, which Charles had already ſuffered, had tended to gratify the duke's revenge; the miſeries to which France had been ſo long expoſed, had begun to move his compaſſion; and the cries of all Europe admoniſhed him, that his reſentment, which might hitherto be deemed pious, would, if carried farther, be univerſally condemned as barbarous and unrelenting. While the duke was in this diſpoſition, every diſguſt, which he received from England, made a double impreſſion upon him; the entreaties of the count de Richemont and the duke of Bourbon, who had married his two ſiſters, had weight; and he determined finally to unite himſelf to the royal family of France, from which his own was deſcended. For this

1435. purpoſe, a congreſs was appointed at Arras under the mediation of deputies from the Pope and the council of Baſle: The duke of Burgundy came thither in perſon: The duke of Bourbon, the count de Richemont and other perſons of high rank, appeared as ambaſſadors from France: And the Engliſh having alſo been invited to attend, the cardinal of Wincheſter, the archbiſhop of York, and others, received from the protector and council a commiſſion for that purpoſe [m].

Auguſt. THE conferences were held in the abbey of St. Vaaſt; and began with diſcuſſing the propoſals of the two crowns, which were ſo wide of each other as to admit of no hopes of accommodation. England offered, that

[m] Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 110.

each

each party ſhould remain in poſſeſſion of what they had at preſent, after making ſome equal exchanges for mutual convenience: France offered to cede Normandy with Guienne, but both of them loaded with the uſual homage and vaſſalage to the crown. As the claims of England upon France were univerſally unpopular in Europe, the mediators declared the offers of Charles very reaſonable; and the cardinal of Wincheſter, with the Engliſh ambaſſadors, immediately left the congreſs. There remained nothing but to diſcuſs the mutual pretenſions of Charles and Philip. Theſe were eaſily adjuſted: The vaſſal was in a ſituation to give law to his ſuperior; and he exacted conditions, which, had it not been for the preſent neceſſity, would have been deemed, to the laſt degree, diſhonourable and diſadvantageous to the crown of France. Beſides making repeated atonements and acknowledgements for the murder of the duke of Burgundy, Charles was obliged to cede all the towns of Picardy which lay between the Somme and the Low Countries; he yielded ſeveral other territories; he agreed, that theſe and all the other dominions of Philip ſhould be held by him, during his life-time, without doing any homage or ſwearing fealty to the preſent King; and he freed his ſubjects from all obligations to allegiance, if ever he infringed this treaty [a]. Such were the conditions, upon which France purchaſed the friendſhip of the duke of Burgundy.

CHAP. XX. 1435.

The duke ſent over a herald to England with a letter, in which he notified the concluſion of the treaty of Arras, and apologized for his departure from that of Troye. The council received the herald with great coldneſs: They even aſſigned him his lodgings in a ſhoemaker's houſe, by way of inſult; and the populace were ſo in-

[a] Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 112. Grafton, p. 565.

cenſed,

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censed, that, if the duke of Gloceſter had not given him guards, his life would have been expoſed to danger, when he appeared in the ſtreets. The Flemings, and other ſubjects of Philip, were inſulted, and ſome of them murdered by the Londoners; and every thing ſeemed to tend towards a rupture between the two nations [9]. Theſe violences were not diſagreeable to the duke of Burgundy; as they afforded him a pretence for the farther meaſures, which he intended to take againſt the Engliſh, whom he now regarded as implacable and dangerous enemies.

1435.

14th Sept. Death of the duke of Bedford.

A FEW days after the duke of Bedford received intelligence of this treaty, ſo fatal to the intereſts of England, he died at Roüen; a prince of great abilities, and of many virtues; and whoſe memory, except from the barbarous execution of the maid of Orleans, was unſullied by any conſiderable blemiſh. Iſabella, Queen of France, died a little before him, deſpiſed by the Engliſh, deteſted by the French, and reduced in her latter years to regard with an unnatural horror, the progreſs and ſucceſſes of her own ſon, in recovering poſſeſſion of his kingdom. This period was alſo ſignalized by the death of the earl of Arundel [a], a great Engliſh general, who, tho' he commanded three thouſand men, was foiled by Xaintrailles at the head of ſix hundred, and ſoon after expired of the wounds which he received in the action.

1436.

THE violent factions, which prevailed in the court of England, between the duke of Gloceſter and the cardinal of Wincheſter, prevented the Engliſh from taking the proper meaſures for repairing theſe multiplied loſſes; and threw all their affairs into confuſion. The popularity of the duke and his near relation to the crown, gave him advantages in the conteſt, which he often loſt

[9] Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 120. Hollingſhed, p. 612.

[a] Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 105. Hollingſhed, p. 610.

by

by his open and unguarded temper, unfit to ſtruggle with the politic and intereſted ſpirit of his rival. The balance, meanwhile, of theſe parties, kept every thing in ſuſpence: Foreign affairs were much neglected: And tho' the duke of York, ſon to that earl of Cambridge, who was executed in the beginning of the laſt reign, was appointed ſucceſſor to the duke of Bedford, it was ſeven months before his commiſſion paſſed the ſeals; and the Engliſh remained ſo long in an enemy's country, without a proper head or governor. CHAP. XX. 1436.

Decline of the Engliſh in France.

THE new governor on his arrival found the capital already loſt. The Pariſians had always been more attached to the Burgundian than to the Engliſh intereſt; and after the concluſion of the treaty of Arras, their affections, without any farther controul, univerſally led them to return to their allegiance under their native ſovereign. The conſtable, together with Lile-Adam, the ſame perſon who had before put Paris into the hands of the duke of Burgundy, was introduced in the night-time by intelligence with the citizens: The lord Willoughby, who commanded only a ſmall garriſon of 1500 men, was expelled: That nobleman diſcovered great valour and preſence of mind on the occaſion; but unable to guard ſo large a place againſt ſuch multitudes, he retired into the Baſtile, and being there inveſted, delivered up the place, and was contented to ſtipulate for the ſafe retreat of his troops into Normandy [b].

IN the ſame ſeaſon, the duke of Burgundy took openly part againſt England, and commenced hoſtilities by the ſiege of Calais, the only place which now gave the Engliſh any ſure hold of France, and ſtill rendered them dangerous. As he was beloved among his own ſubjects, and had acquired the epithet of *Good*, from

[b] Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 127. Graſton, p. 568.

his

CHAP. XX. 1436.

his popular qualities, he was able to intereſt all the inhabitants of the Low-Countries in the ſucceſs of this enterprize; and he inveſted that place with an army, very formidable from its numbers, but without experience, diſcipline, or military ſpirit [c]. On the firſt alarm of this ſiege, the duke of Gloceſter aſſembled ſome forces, ſent a defiance to Philip, and challenged him to wait the event of a battle, which he promiſed to give, as ſoon as the wind would permit him to reach Calais. The warlike genius of the Engliſh had at that time rendered them terrible to all the northern parts of Europe; much more to the Flemings, who were more expert in manufactures, than in arms; and the duke of Burgundy, being already foiled in ſome attempts before Calais, and obſerving the diſcontent and terror of his own army, thought proper to raiſe the ſiege, and to retreat into his own territories, before the arrival of the enemy [d].

26th June.

THE Engliſh were ſtill maſters of many fine provinces in France; but retained poſſeſſion, more by the extreme weakneſs of Charles, than by the ſtrength of their own garriſons or the force of their armies. Nothing indeed can be more ſurpriſing than the feeble efforts made, during the courſe of ſeveral years, by theſe two potent nations againſt each other; while the one ſtruggled for independancy, and the other aſpired to a total conqueſt of its rival. The general want of induſtry, commerce, and police, in that age, had rendered all the European nations, and France and England no leſs than the others, unfit for bearing the burthens of war, when it was prolonged beyond one ſeaſon; and the continuance of hoſtilities had, long ere this time, exhauſted the force and patience of both theſe kingdoms. Scarce

[c] Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 126. 130. 132. Hollingſhed, p. 613. Graſton, p. 571.

[d] Monſtrelet, vol. ii. p. 136. Hollingſhed, p. 614.

could

could the appearance of an army be brought into the field on either ſide; and all the mighty operations conſiſted in the ſurprize of places, in the rencounter of detached parties, and in incurſions upon the open country; which were performed by ſmall bodies aſſembled on a ſudden from the neighbouring garriſons. In this method of conducting the war, the French King had much the advantage: The affections of the people were entirely on his ſide: Intelligence was early brought him of the ſtate and motions of the enemy: The inhabitants were ready to join in any attempts againſt the garriſons: And thus ground was continually, tho' ſlowly, gained againſt the Engliſh. The duke of York, who was a prince of ability, ſtruggled againſt theſe difficulties during the courſe of five years; and being aſſiſted by the valour of lord Talbot, ſoon after created earl of Shrewſbury, he performed actions which acquired him honour, but merit not the attention of poſterity. It would have been well, had this feeble war, in ſparing the blood of the people, prevented likewiſe all other oppreſſions; and had the fury of men, which reaſon and juſtice cannot reſtrain, thus happily received a check from their impotence and inability. But the French and Engliſh, tho' they exerted ſuch ſmall force, were, however, ſtretching beyond their reſources, which were ſtill ſmaller; and the troops, deſtitute of pay, were obliged to ſubſiſt by plundering and oppreſſing the country, both of friends and enemies. The fields in all the north of France, which was the ſeat of war, were laid waſte and left uncultivated *. The cities were gradually depopulated, not by the blood ſpilt in battle, but by the more deſtructive pillage of the garriſons: And both parties, weary of hoſtilities, which decided nothing, ſeemed at laſt deſirous of

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1436.

1440.

* Craſton, p. 562.

peace,

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THE duke of York ſoon after reſigned his government to the earl of Warwic, a nobleman of reputation, whom death prevented from a long enjoyment of his dignity. The duke, upon the demiſe of this nobleman, returned to his charge, and during his adminiſtration a truce was concluded between the King of England and the duke of Burgundy, which had become neceſſary for the commercial intereſt of their ſubjects [f]. The war with France continued in the ſame languid and feeble ſtate as before.

THE captivity of five princes of the blood, taken priſoners in the battle of Azincour, was a conſiderable advantage which England long enjoyed above its enemy; but this ſuperiority was now entirely loſt. Some of theſe princes had died; ſome had been ranſomed for ſums of money; and the duke of Orleans, the moſt powerful among them, was the laſt who remained in the hands of the

[f] Grafton, p. 573.

the Engliſh. He offered the ſum of 54,000 nobles [g] for his liberty; and when this propoſal was laid before the council of England, as every queſtion was there an object of faction, the party of the duke of Gloceſter, and that of the cardinal of Wincheſter, were divided in their ſentiments with regard to it. The duke reminded the council of the dying advice of the late King, that none of theſe priſoners ſhould on any account be releaſed, till his ſon was of ſufficient age to hold, himſelf, the reins of government. The cardinal inſiſted on the greatneſs of the ſum proffered, which in reality was near equal to two thirds of all the extraordinary ſupplies, that the parliament, during the courſe of ſeven years, granted for the ſupport of the war. And he added, that the releaſe of this prince was more likely to be advantageous than prejudicial to the Engliſh intereſts; by filling the court of France with faction, and giving a head to thoſe numerous malecontents, whom Charles was at preſent able with great difficulty to reſtrain. The cardinal's party, as uſual, prevailed: The duke of Orleans was releaſed, after a melancholy captivity of twenty-five years [h]: And the duke of Burgundy, as a pledge of his entire reconciliation with the family of Orleans, facilitated to that prince the payment of his ranſom. It muſt be confeſſed, that the princes and nobility in thoſe ages, went to war on very diſadvantageous terms. If they were taken priſoners, they either remained in captivity during life, or purchaſed their liberty at the price which the victors were pleaſed to impoſe, and which often reduced their families to beggary and want.

CHAP. XX. 1440.

[g] Rymer, vol. x. p. 764. 776. 782. 795, 796. This ſum was equal to 36,000 pounds ſterling of our preſent money. A ſubſidy of a tenth and fifteenth was fixed by Edward III. at 29,000 pounds, that is 58,000 of our preſent money. The parliament granted only one ſubſidy during the courſe of ſeven years, from 1437 to 1444.

[h] Graſton, p. 578.

THE

CHAP. XX.

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[h] Grafton, p. 578.

THE

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1443. THE ſentiments of the cardinal, ſome time after, prevailed in another point of ſtill greater moment. That prelate had always encouraged every propoſal of accommodation with France; and had repreſented the utter impoſſibility, in the preſent circumſtances, of puſhing farther the conqueſts in that kingdom, and the great difficulty of even maintaining thoſe which were already made. He inſiſted on the extreme reluctance of the parliament to grant ſupplies; the diſorders in which the Engliſh affairs in Normandy were involved; the daily progreſs made by the French King; and the advantage of ſtopping his hand by a temporary accommodation, which might leave room for time and accidents to operate in favour of the Engliſh. The duke of Gloceſter, high ſpirited and haughty, and educated in the lofty pretenſions, which the firſt ſucceſſes of his two brothers had rendered familiar to him, could not yet be induced to relinquiſh all hopes of prevailing over France; much leſs, could he ſee with patience, his own opinion thwarted and rejected by the influence of his rival in the Engliſh council. But notwithſtanding his oppoſition, the earl of Suffolk, a nobleman who always adhered to the cardinal's party, was diſpatched to Tours, in order to negotiate with the French miniſters. It was found impoſſible to adjuſt the terms of a laſting peace; but a truce for twenty-two months was concluded, which left every thing on the preſent footing between the parties. The numerous diſorders, under which the French government laboured, and which time alone could remedy, induced Charles to aſſent to this truce; and the ſame motives engaged him afterwards to prolong it [1]. But Suffolk, not content with executing this object of his commiſſion, proceeded alſo to finiſh another buſineſs, which ſeems

28th May. Truce with France.

[1] Rymer, vol. xi. p. 101. 108. 206. 214.

rather to have been implied than included in the powers, which had been granted him [k]. CHAP. XX.

In proportion as Henry advanced in years, his character became fully known in the court, and was no longer ambiguous to either faction. Of the moſt harmleſs, inoffenſive, ſimple manners; but of the moſt ſlender capacity; he was fitted, both by the ſoftneſs of his temper, and the weakneſs of his underſtanding, to be perpetually governed by thoſe who ſurrounded him; and it was eaſy to foreſee, that his reign would prove a perpetual minority. As he had now reached the twenty-third year of his age, it was natural to think of chooſing him a Queen; and each party was ambitious of having him receive one from their hand; as it was probable, that this circumſtance would decide forever the victory between them. The duke of Gloceſter propoſed a daughter of the count d'Armagnac; but had not credit to effectuate his purpoſe. The cardinal and his friends had caſt their eye on Margaret of Anjou, daughter of Regnier, titular King of Sicily, Naples, and Jeruſalem, deſcended from the count of Anjou, brother of Charles V. who had left theſe magnificent titles, but without any real power or poſſeſſions, to his poſterity. This princeſs herſelf was the moſt accompliſhed of her age both in body and mind; and ſeemed to poſſeſs thoſe qualities, which would equally qualify her to acquire the aſcendant over Henry, and to ſupply all his defects and weakneſſes. Of a maſculine, courageous ſpirit, of an enterprizing temper, endowed with ſolidity as well as vivacity of underſtanding, ſhe had not been able to conceal theſe great talents even in the privacy of her father's family; and it was reaſonable to expect, that, when ſhe ſhould mount the throne, they would break out with ſtill ſuperior luſtre. The earl of Suffolk, therefore, in concert with his aſſo- 1443.

[k] Rymer, vol. xi. p. 53.

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1443. ciates of the Engliſh council, made propoſals of marriage to Margaret, which were accepted. But this nobleman, beſides pre-occupying the princeſs's favour by being the chief means of her advancement, endeavoured to ingratiate himſelf with her and her family, by very extraordinary conceſſions: Tho' Margaret brought no dowry with her, he ventured of himſelf, without any direct authority from the council, but probably with the allowance of the cardinal, and the ruling members, to engage by a ſecret article, that the province of Maine, which was at that time in the hands of the Engliſh, ſhould be delivered up to Charles of Anjou her uncle [l], who was prime miniſter and favourite of the French King, and who had already received from his maſter the grant of that province as his appanage.

Marriage of the King with Margaret of Anjou.

THE treaty of marriage was ratified in England: Suffolk obtained firſt the title of marquis, then that of duke; and even received the thanks of parliament, for his ſervices in concluding it [m]. The princeſs fell immediately into cloſe connexions with the cardinal and his party, the dukes of Somerſet, Suffolk, and Buckingham [n]; who, fortified by her powerful friendſhip, reſolved on the final ruin of the duke of Gloceſter.

1447. THIS generous prince, worſted in all court intrigues, for which his temper was not ſuited, but poſſeſſing, in a high degree, the favour of the public, had already received from his rivals a moſt cruel mortification, which he had hitherto born patiently, but which it was impoſſible, that a perſon of his ſpirit and humanity could ever forgive. His dutcheſs, the daughter of Reginald, lord Cobham, had been accuſed of the crime of witchcraft, and it was pretended, that a waxen figure of the King was

[l] Grafton, p. 590.
[m] Cotton, p. 630.
[n] Hollingſhed, p. 626.

found

found in her poſſeſſion, which ſhe and her aſſociates, Sir Roger Bolingbroke a prieſt, and one Margery Jordan of Eye, melted in a magical manner before a ſlow fire, with an intention of making Henry's force and vigour waſte away, by like inſenſible degrees. The accuſation was well calculated to affect the weak and credulous mind of the King, and to gain belief in an ignorant age; and the dutcheſs was brought to trial with her confederates. The nature of this crime, ſo oppoſite to all common ſenſe, ſeems always to exempt the accuſers from obſerving the rules of common ſenſe in their evidence: The priſoners were pronounced guilty; the dutcheſs was condemned to do public penance, and to ſuffer perpetual impriſonment, and the others were executed [o]. But as theſe violent proceedings were aſcribed ſolely to the malice of the duke's enemies, the people, contrary to their uſual practice on ſuch occaſions, acquitted the unhappy ſufferers; and encreaſed their eſteem and affection towards a prince, who was thus expoſed, without protection, to ſuch mortal injuries.

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THESE ſentiments of the public made the cardinal of Wincheſter and his party ſenſible, that it was neceſſary to deſtroy a man, whoſe popularity might become dangerous, and whoſe reſentment they had ſo much cauſe to apprehend. In order to effectuate their purpoſe, a parliament was ſummoned to meet, not at London, which was ſuppoſed to be too well affected to the duke, but at St. Edmondſbury, where they expected that he would lie entirely at mercy. As ſoon as he appeared, he was accuſed of treaſon, and thrown into priſon. He was ſoon after found dead in his bed [p]; and tho' it was pretended that his death was natural, and tho' his body, which

28th Feb. Murder of the duke of Gloceſter.

[o] Stowe, p. 381. Hollingſhed, p. 622. Graſton, p. 587.

[p] Grafton, p. 597.

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was expoſed to public view, bore no marks of outward injury, no one doubted that he had fallen a ſacrifice to the vengeance of his enemies. A trick, formerly practiſed on Edward II. on Richard II. and on Thomas of Woodſtock, duke of Gloceſter, could deceive no body. The reaſon of this violence ſeems not, that the ruling party apprehended his acquittal in parliament on account of his innocence, which, in ſuch times, was ſeldom much regarded; but that they imagined his public trial and execution would have been more invidious than his private murder, which they pretended to deny. Some gentlemen of his retinue were afterwards tried for aiding him in his treaſons, and were condemned to be hanged, drawn and quartered. They were hanged and cut down; but juſt as the executioner was proceeding to quarter them, their pardon was produced, and they were recovered to life [q]. The moſt barbarous kind of mercy that can poſſibly be imagined!

THIS prince is ſaid to have received a more learned education than was uſual in his age, to have founded one of the firſt public libraries in England, and to have been a great patron of learned men. Among other advantages, which he reaped from this turn of mind, it tended much to cure him of credulity; of which the following inſtance is given by Sir Thomas More. There was a man, who pretended, that, tho' he was born blind, he had recovered his ſight by touching the ſhrine of St. Albans. The duke, happening ſoon after to paſs that way, queſtioned the man, and ſeeming to doubt of his ſight, aſked him the colour of ſeveral cloaks, worn by perſons in his retinue. The man told him very readily. *You are a knave*, cried the prince; *had you been born blind, you could not have diſtinguiſhed colours:* And immediately ordered him to be put in the ſtocks as an impoſtor [r].

[q] Fabian Chron. anno 1447. [r] Grafton, p. 597.

THE

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THE cardinal of Wincheſter died ſix weeks after his nephew, whoſe murder was univerſally aſcribed to him as well as to the duke of Suffolk, and which, it is ſaid, gave him more remorſe in his laſt moments, than could naturally be expected from a man hardened, during the courſe of a long life, in falſhood and in politics. What ſhare the Queen had in this guilt is uncertain; her uſual activity and ſpirit made the public conclude with ſome reaſon that the duke's enemies durſt not have ventured on ſuch a deed without her privity. But there happened ſoon after an event, of which ſhe and her favourite, the duke of Suffolk, bore unconteſtibly the whole odium. 1447.

THAT article of the marriage treaty, by which the province of Maine was to be yielded to Charles of Anjou, the Queen's uncle, had probably been hitherto kept a ſecret; and during the lifetime of the duke of Gloceſter, it would have been dangerous to venture on the execution of it. But as the court of France inſiſted ſtrenuouſly on performance, orders were now diſpatched, under Henry's hand, to Sir Francis Surienne, governor of Mans, commanding him to ſurrender that place to Charles of Anjou. Surienne, either queſtioning the authenticity of the order, or regarding his government as his only fortune, refuſed compliance; and it became neceſſary for a French army, under the count de Dunois, to lay ſiege to the city. The governor made as good a defence as his ſituation could permit; but receiving no relief from Edmund duke of Somerſet, who was at that time governor of Normandy, he was at laſt obliged to capitulate, and to ſurrender not only Mans, but all the other fortreſſes of that province, which was thus entirely alienated from the crown of England.

THE bad effects of this meaſure ſtopped not here. Surienne, at the head of all his garriſons, amounting to 2500 men, retired into Normandy, in expectation of 1448.

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being taken into pay, and of being quartered in ſome towns of that province. But Somerſet, who had no means of ſubſiſting ſuch a multitude, and who was probably incenſed at Surienne's diſobedience, refuſed to admit him; and this adventurer, not daring to commit depredations on the territories either of the King of France or of England, marched into Brittany, ſeized the town of Fougeres, repaired the fortifications of Pontorſon and St. James de Beuvron, and ſubſiſted his troops by the ravages, which he committed on all that province [s]. The duke of Brittany complained of this violence to the King of France, his liege lord: Charles remonſtrated with the duke of Somerſet: That nobleman replied, that the injury was done without his privity, and that he had no authority over Surienne and his companions [t]. Tho' this anſwer might appear very ſatisfactory to Charles, who had often felt ſeverely the licentious, independant ſpirit of ſuch mercenary ſoldiers, he never would admit the apology. He ſtill inſiſted, that theſe plunderers ſhould be recalled, and that reparation ſhould be made to the duke of Brittany for all the damages, which they had committed: And in order to render an accommodation abſolutely impracticable, he made the eſtimation of damages amount to no leſs a ſum than 1,600,000 crowns. He was ſenſible of the ſuperiority, which the preſent ſtate of his affairs gave him over England; and he determined to take advantage of it.

State of France.

No ſooner was the truce concluded between the two kingdoms, than Charles employed himſelf, with great induſtry and judgment, in repairing thoſe numberleſs ills, to which France, from the continuance of wars both foreign and domeſtic, had ſo long been expoſed. He reſtored the courſe of public juſtice; he introduced order

[s] Monſtrelet, vol. iii. p. 6.

[t] Ibid. p. 7. Hollingſhed, p. 629.

into

into the finances; he eſtabliſhed diſcipline in his troops; he repreſſed faction in his court; he revived the languid ſtate of agriculture and the arts; and in the courſe of a few years, he rendered his kingdom flouriſhing within itſelf, and formidable to all its neighbours. Meanwhile, affairs in England had taken a very different turn. The court was divided into parties, which were enraged againſt each other: The people were diſcontented with the government: Conqueſts in France, which were an object more of glory than of intereſt, were overlooked amidſt domeſtic incidents, which engroſſed all mens attention: The governor of Normandy, ill ſupplied with money, was obliged to diſmiſs the greater part of his troops, and to allow the fortifications of the towns and caſtles to fall into diſrepair: And the nobility and people of that province had, during the open communication with France, enjoyed frequent opportunities of renewing connexions with their antient maſter, and of concerting the means for expelling the Engliſh. The occaſion therefore ſeemed favourable to Charles for breaking the truce; and Normandy was at once invaded by four powerful armies; one commanded by the King himſelf; a ſecond by the duke of Brittany; a third by the duke of Alençon; and a fourth by the count de Dunois. The places opened their gates almoſt as ſoon as the French appeared before them: Verneüil, Nogent, Chateau Gaillard, Ponteau de mer, Giſors, Mante, Vernon, Argentan, Liſieux, Fecamp, Coutances, Beleſme, Pont de l'Arche, fell in an inſtant into the hands of the enemy: The duke of Somerſet was ſo far from having an army, which could take the field, and relieve theſe places, that he was not able to ſupply them with the neceſſary garriſons and proviſions: He retired with the few troops, of which he was maſter, into Roüen; and thought it ſufficient, if, till the arrival of ſuccours from England, he could ſave

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Renewal of the war with France.

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that capital from the general fate of the province. The King of France, at the head of a formidable army, fifty

1449. thouſand ſtrong, preſented himſelf before the gates: The dangerous example of revolt had infected the inhabitants, and they called aloud for a capitulation. Somerſet, unable to reſiſt at once both the enemies within and from without, retired with his garriſon into the palace and caſtle; which, being places not tenable, he was obliged to ſurrender: He purchaſed a retreat to Har-

4th Nov. fleur by the payment of 56,000 crowns, by engaging to ſurrender Arques, Tancarville, Caudebec, Honfleur, and other places in the higher Normandy, and by delivering hoſtages for the performance of theſe articles [u].

1450. The governor of Honfleur refuſed to obey his orders; upon which, the earl of Shrewſbury, who was one of the hoſtages, was detained priſoner; and the Engliſh were thus deprived of the only general, capable of recovering them from their preſent diſtreſſed ſituation. Harfleur made a better defence under Sir Thomas Curſon, the governor; but was finally obliged to open its gates to the count de Dunois. Succours at laſt appeared from England under Sir Thomas Kyriel, and landed at Cherbourg: But theſe came very late, amounted only to 4000 men, and were ſoon after put to rout at Fourmigni by the count de Clermont [x]. This battle, or rather ſkirmiſh, was the only action fought by the Engliſh for the defence of their dominions in France, which they had purchaſed at ſuch an expence of blood and treaſure. Somerſet, ſhut up in Caën without any proſpect of relief, found it neceſſary to capitulate: Falaiſe opened its gates, on condition that the earl of Shrewſbury ſhould be reſtored to liberty: And Cherbourg, the laſt place of Normandy, which remained in the hands of the

[u] Monſtrelet, vol. iii. p. 22. Grafton, p. 643.

[x] Hollingſhed, p. 631.

Engliſh,

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Engliſh, being delivered up, the conqueſt of that important province was finiſhed in a twelvemonth by Charles, to the infinite joy of the inhabitants and of his whole kingdom[y].

A LIKE rapid ſucceſs attended the French arms in Guienne; tho' the inhabitants of that province were, from long cuſtom, better inclined to the Engliſh government. The count de Dunois was diſpatched thither, and met with no reſiſtance in the field, and very little from the towns. Great improvements had been made, during this age, in the ſtructure and management of artillery, and none in fortification; and the art of defence was by that means more unequal, than either before or ſince, to the art of attack. After all the ſmall places about Bourdeaux were reduced, that city agreed to ſubmit, if not relieved by a certain time; and as no one in England thought ſeriouſly of theſe diſtant concerns, no relief appeared; the place ſurrendered; and Bayonne being taken ſoon after, this whole province, which had remained united to England, ſince the acceſſion of Henry II. was, after a period of three centuries, finally ſwallowed up by the French monarchy.

The Engliſh expelled France.

THO' no peace nor truce was concluded between France and England, the war was in a manner at an end. The Engliſh, torn in pieces by the civil diſſenſions which enſued, made but one feeble effort more for the recovery of Guienne: And Charles, occupied at home, in regulating the government, and fencing againſt the intrigues of his factious ſon, Lewis the Dauphin, ſcarce ever attempted to invade them in their iſland, or to retaliate upon them, by availing himſelf of their inteſtine confuſions.

[y] Grafton, p. 646.

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HENRY VI.

Claim of the duke of York to the crown——The earl of Warwic——Impeachment of the duke of Suffolk——His baniſhment——and death——Popular inſurrection——The parties of York and Lancaſter——Firſt armament of the duke of York——Firſt battle of St. Albans——Battle of Blore-heath——of Northampton——A parliament——Battle of Wakefield——Death of the duke of York——Battle of Mortimer's Croſs——Second Battle of St. Albans——Edward IV. *aſſumes the crown——Miſcellaneous tranſactions of this reign.*

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A WEAK prince, ſeated on the throne of England, had never failed, however gentle and innocent, to be infeſted with faction, diſcontent, rebellion, and civil commotions; and as the incapacity of Henry appeared every day in a fuller light, theſe dangerous conſequences began, from paſt experience, to be univerſally and juſtly apprehended. Men alſo of unquiet ſpirits, no longer employed in foreign wars, whence they were now excluded by the ſituation of the neighbouring ſtates, were the more likely to excite inteſtine diſorders, and by their emulation, rivalſhip, and animoſities, to tear the bowels of their native country. But tho' theſe cauſes alone were ſufficient to breed confuſion, there concurred another circumſtance of the moſt dangerous nature: A pretender to the crown appeared. The title itſelf

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of the weak prince, who enjoyed the name of ſovereignty, was diſputed: And the Engliſh were now to pay the ſevere, tho' late penalty, of their turbulence againſt Richard II. and of their levity in violating, without any neceſſity or juſt reaſon, the lineal ſucceſſion of their monarchs.

Claim of the duke of York to the crown.

ALL the males of the houſe of Mortimer were extinct; but Anne, the ſiſter of the laſt earl of Marche, having eſpouſed the earl of Cambridge, beheaded in the reign of Henry V. had tranſmitted her latent, but not yet forgotten claim to her ſon, Richard, duke of York. This prince, thus deſcended by his mother from Philippa, only daughter of the duke of Clarence, ſecond ſon of Edward III. ſtood plainly in the order of ſucceſſion before the King, who derived his deſcent from the duke of Lancaſter, third ſon of that monarch; and that claim could not, in many reſpects, have fallen into more dangerous hands than thoſe of the duke of York. Richard was a man of valour and abilities, of a prudent conduct and mild diſpoſitions: He had enjoyed an opportunity of diſplaying theſe virtues in his government of France: And tho' recalled from that command by the intrigues and ſuperior intereſt of the duke of Somerſet, he had been ſent to ſuppreſs a rebellion in Ireland; had ſucceeded much better in that enterprize than his rival in the defence of Normandy; and had even been able to attach to his perſon and family, the whole Iriſh nation, whom he was ſent to ſubdue[a]. In the right of his father, he bore the rank of firſt prince of the blood; and by this ſtation, he gave a luſtre to his title derived from the family of Mortimer, which, tho' of great nobility, was equaled by other families in the kingdom, and had been eclipſed by the royal deſcent of the houſe

[a] Stowe, p. 387.

of

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of Lancaſter. He poſſeſſed an immenſe fortune from the union of ſo many ſucceſſions, thoſe of Cambridge and York on the one hand, with thoſe of Mortimer on the other: Which laſt inheritance had before been augmented by an union of the eſtates of Clarence and Ulſter, with the patrimonial poſſeſſions of the family of Marche. The alliances too of Richard, in marrying the daughter of Ralph Nevil, earl of Weſtmoreland, had very widely extended his intereſt among the nobility, and had procured him many connexions in that formidable order.

THE family of Nevil was perhaps at this time the moſt potent, both from their opulent poſſeſſions and from the characters of the men, that has ever appeared in England. For beſides the earl of Weſtmoreland, the lords Latimer, Fauconbridge, and Abergavenny; the earls of Saliſbury and Warwic were of that family, and were of themſelves, on many accounts, the greateſt noblemen of the kingdom. The earl of Saliſbury, brother-in-law to the duke of York, was the eldeſt ſon by a ſecond marriage of the earl of Weſtmoreland; and inherited by his wife, daughter and heir of Montacute, earl of Saliſbury, killed before Orleans, the poſſeſſions and title of that great family. His eldeſt ſon, Richard, had married Anne, the daughter and heir of Beauchamp, earl of Warwic, who died governor of France; and by that alliance he enjoyed the poſſeſſions, and had acquired the title of that other family, one of the moſt opulent, moſt antient, and moſt illuſtrious of the kingdom. The perſonal qualities alſo of theſe two earls, eſpecially of Warwic, enhanced the ſplendor of their nobility, and encreaſed their influence over the people. This latter nobleman, commonly known, from the ſubſequent events, by the appellation of the *King-maker*, had diſtinguiſhed himſelf, by his gallantry in the field, by the hoſpitality of his table, by the magnificence, and ſtill more

The earl of Warwic.

by the generoſity of his expence, and by the ſpirited and bold manner, which attended him in all his actions. The undeſigning frankneſs and openneſs of his character rendered his conqueſt over men's affections the more certain and infallible: His preſents were regarded as ſure teſtimonies of eſteem and friendſhip; and his profeſſions as the overflowings of his genuine ſentiments. No leſs than 30,000 people are ſaid to have daily lived at his board in the different manors and caſtles which he poſſeſſed in England: The military men, allured by his munificence and hoſpitality, as well as by his bravery, were zealouſly attached to his intereſts: The people in general bore him an unlimited affection: His numerous retainers were more devoted to his will, than to the prince or to the laws: And he was the greateſt, as well as the laſt, of thoſe mighty barons, who formerly overawed the crown, and rendered the people incapable of any regular ſyſtem of civil government. CHAP. XXI. 1450.

But the duke of York, beſides the family of Nevil, had many other partizans among the great nobility. Courtney, earl of Devonſhire, deſcended from the royal blood of France, was attached to his intereſts: Moubray, duke of Norfolk, from his hereditary hatred to the family of Lancaſter, had embraced the ſame party: And the diſcontents, which univerſally prevailed among the people, rendered every combination of the great the more dangerous to the eſtabliſhed government.

Tho' the people were never willing to grant the ſupplies neceſſary for keeping poſſeſſion of the conquered provinces in France, they repined extremely at the loſs of theſe boaſted acquiſitions; and fancied, becauſe a ſudden irruption could make conqueſts, that, without ſteady counſels and an uniform expence, it was poſſible to maintain them. The voluntary ceſſion of Maine to the queen's uncle, had made them ſuſpect treachery in the loſs of Normandy

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Normandy and Guienne. They ſtill conſidered Margaret as a French woman and a latent enemy of the kingdom. And when they ſaw her father and all her relations active in promoting the ſucceſs of the French, they could not be perſuaded, that ſhe, who was all powerful in the Engliſh council, would very zealouſly oppoſe them in their enterprizes.

But the moſt fatal blow, which was given to the popularity of the crown and to the intereſts of the houſe of Lancaſter, was by the aſſaſſination of the virtuous duke of Gloceſter, whoſe character, had he been alive, would have kept in awe the partizans of York, but whoſe memory, being extremely cheriſhed by the people, ſerved to throw an infinite odium on all his murderers. By this event, the reigning family ſuffered a double prejudice: It was deprived of its firmeſt ſupport; and it was loaded with all the infamy of that imprudent and barbarous execution.

As the duke of Suffolk was known to have had an active hand in this crime, he partook deeply of the hatred, which attended it; and the clamours, which neceſſarily roſe againſt him, as prime miniſter and declared favourite of the queen, were thereby augmented to a tenfold pitch, and became abſolutely uncontroleable. The great nobility could ill brook to ſee a ſubject exalted above them; much more one who was only great grandſon to a merchant, and who was of a birth ſo much inferior to theirs. The people complained of his arbitrary meaſures; which were, in ſome degree, a neceſſary conſequence of the irregular power then poſſeſſed by the prince, but which the leaſt diſaffection eaſily magnified into tyranny. The immenſe acquiſitions, which he daily made, were the object of envy; and as they were made at the expence of the crown, which was itſelf reduced to the moſt ſcandalous poverty, they appeared on that account,

account, to all indifferent perſons, the more exceptionable and invidious. CHAP. XXI.

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THE revenues of the crown, which had long been diſproportioned to its power and dignity, had been extremely dilapidated during the minority of Henry [a]; both by the rapacity of the courtiers, which the King's uncles could not controul, and by the neceſſary expences of the French war, which had always been ſo ill ſupplied by the grants of parliament. The royal demeſnes were diſſipated, and at the ſame time the King was loaded with a debt of 372,000 pounds, a ſum ſo immenſe, that the parliament could never think of diſcharging it. This unhappy ſituation forced the miniſters upon many arbitrary meaſures: The houſehold itſelf could not be ſupported without ſtretching to the utmoſt the right of purveyance, and rendering it a kind of univerſal robbery upon the people: The public clamour roſe high upon this occaſion, and no one had the equity to make allowance for the neceſſity of the King's ſituation. Suffolk, once become odious, bore the blame of the whole; and every grievance in every part of the adminiſtration was univerſally imputed to his tyranny and injuſtice.

Impeachment of the duke of Suffolk.

THIS nobleman, ſenſible of the public hatred under which he laboured, and foreſeeing an attack from the commons, endeavoured to overawe his enemies, by boldly preſenting himſelf to the charge, and by inſiſting upon his own innocence, and even upon his merits and thoſe of his family in the public ſervice. He roſe up in the houſe of peers; took notice of the clamours propagated againſt him; and complained, that, after ſerving the crown in thirty-four campaigns, after ſtaying abroad ſeventeen years without once returning to his own country; after loſing a father and three brothers in the wars with France;

[a] Cotton, p. 609.

after

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after being himſelf a priſoner, and purchaſing his liberty by a large ranſom; it ſhould yet be ſuſpected, that he had been debauched from his allegiance by that enemy whom he had ever oppoſed with ſuch zeal and fortitude, and that he had betrayed his prince, who had rewarded his ſervices by the higheſt honours and greateſt offices, which it was in his power to confer [b]. This ſpeech did not anſwer the purpoſe intended. The commons, rather the more provoked at his challenge, opened their charge againſt Suffolk, and ſent up to the houſe of peers an accuſation of high treaſon, divided into ſeveral articles. They inſiſted, that he had perſuaded the French King to invade England with an armed force, in order to depoſe the King, to place on the throne his own ſon, John de la Pole, whom he intended to marry to Margaret, the only daughter of the late John, duke of Somerſet, and to whom, he imagined, he would by that means acquire a title to the crown: That he had contributed to the releaſe of the duke of Orleans, in hopes, that that prince would aid and aſſiſt King Charles in expelling the Engliſh from France, and recovering full poſſeſſion of his kingdom: That he had afterwards encouraged that King to make open war on Normandy and Guienne, and had promoted his conqueſts by betraying the ſecrets of England, and obſtructing the ſuccours propoſed to be ſent over to thoſe provinces: And that he had, without any powers or commiſſion, promiſed by treaty to deliver up the province of Maine to Charles of Anjou, and had accordingly delivered it up; a conceſſion, which proved in the iſſue the chief cauſe of the loſs of Normandy [c].

[b] Cotton, p. 641. [c] Cotton, p. 642. Hall, fol. 157. Holingſhed, p. 631. Grafton, p. 607.

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It is evident, from a review of these articles, that the commons adopted without enquiry all the popular clamours against the duke of Suffolk, and charged him with crimes, of which none but the vulgar could seriously believe him guilty. Nothing can be more incredible, than that a nobleman of his rank and character could think of acquiring the crown to his family, and of deposing Henry by foreign force, and together with him, Margaret, his patron, a princess of so much spirit and penetration. Suffolk appealed to many noblemen in the house, who knew, that he had intended to marry his son to one of the co-heirs of the earl of Warwic, and was disappointed in his design only by the death of that lady: And he observed, that Margaret of Somerset could bring to her husband no title to the crown; because she herself was not so much as comprehended in the entail, settled by act of parliament. It is easy to account for the loss of Normandy and Guienne from the situation of affairs in the two kingdoms, without supposing any treachery in the English ministers; and it may safely be affirmed, that greater vigour of council was requisite to defend them from the arms of Charles VII. than to conquer them at first from his predecessor. It could never be the interest of any English minister to betray and abandon these provinces; much less of one, who was so well established in his master's favour, who enjoyed such high honours and ample possessions in his own country, who had nothing to dread but the effects of popular hatred, and who could never think, without the most extreme reluctance, of becoming a fugitive and exile in a foreign land. The only article, which carries any face of probability, is his engagement for the delivery of Maine to Charles of Anjou; but Suffolk maintained, with great appearance of truth, that this measure was known and consented to by several at the

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council board [d]; and it ſeems hard to aſcribe to it, as is done by the parliament, the ſubſequent loſs of Normandy and expulſion of the Engliſh. Normandy lay open on every ſide to the invaſion of the French: Maine, an inland province, muſt ſoon after have fallen without any attack: And as the Engliſh poſſeſſed in other parts more fortreſſes than they could garriſon or provide for, it ſeemed no bad policy to contract their force, and to render the defence practicable, by reducing it into ſmaller compaſs.

THE commons were probably ſenſible, that this charge of treaſon againſt Suffolk would not bear a ſtrict ſcrutiny; and they therefore ſent up, ſoon after, a new charge of miſdemeanors, which they alſo divided into ſeveral articles. They affirmed, among other imputations, that he had procured exorbitant grants from the crown, had embezzled the public money, had conferred offices on improper perſons, had perverted juſtice by maintaining iniquitous cauſes, and had procured pardons to notorious offenders [e]. The articles are moſtly general; but are not improbable: And as Suffolk ſeems to have been a bad man and a bad miniſter, it will not be raſh in us to think, that he was guilty, and that many of theſe articles could have been proved againſt him. The court was alarmed at the proſecution of a favourite miniſter, who lay under ſuch a load of popular prejudices; and an expedient was fallen upon to ſave him from preſent ruin. The King ſent for all the lords, ſpiritual and temporal, to his apartment: The priſoner was produced before them, and aſked what he could ſay in his own defence: He denied the charge; but ſubmitted to the King's mercy: Henry expreſſed himſelf not to be ſatisfied with regard to the firſt bill of treaſons; but in conſideration of the ſecond of miſdemeanors, he declared, that, by virtue

[d] Cotton, p. 643. [e] Ibid. p. 643.

of

of Suffolk's own ſubmiſſion, not by any judicial authority, he baniſhed him the kingdom during five years. The lords remained ſilent; but ſo ſoon as they returned to their own houſe, they entered a proteſt, that this ſentence ſhould nowiſe infringe their privileges, and that if Suffolk had inſiſted upon his right, and had not ſubmitted voluntarily to the King's orders, he was intitled to a trial by his peers in parliament. CHAP. XXI. 1450. His baniſhment,

It was eaſy to ſee, that theſe irregular proceedings were meant to favour Suffolk, and that, as he ſtill poſſeſſed the Queen's confidence, he would, on the firſt favourable opportunity, be reſtored to his country, and be re-inſtated in his former power and credit. A captain of a veſſel was therefore employed by his enemies to intercept him in his paſſage to France: He was ſeized near Dover; his head ſtruck off on the ſide of a long boat, and his body thrown into the ſea [f]. No enquiry was made after the authors and accomplices of this atrocious act of violence. and death.

The duke of Somerſet ſucceeded to Suffolk's power in the miniſtry, and credit with the Queen; and as he was the perſon, in whoſe hands the French provinces were loſt, the public, who judge always by the event, ſoon made him equally the object of their animoſity and hatred. The duke of York was abſent in Ireland during all theſe tranſactions; and however it might be ſuſpected, that his partizans had excited and ſupported the proſecution of Suffolk, no immediate ground of complaint could, on that account, lie againſt him. But there happened ſoon after an incident, which rouzed the jealouſy of the court, and diſcovered to them the extreme danger, to which

[f] Hall, fol. 158. Hiſt. Croyland. contin. p. 525. Stowe, p. 388. Grafton, p. 610.

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they were expoſed from the pretenſions of that wiſe and popular prince.

1450. THE humours of the people, ſet afloat by the parliamentary impeachment, and by the fall of ſo great a favourite as Suffolk, broke out in various commotions, which were ſoon ſuppreſſed; but there aroſe one in Kent, which was likely to have been attended with more dangerous conſequences. A man of low condition, one John Cade, a native of Ireland, who had been obliged to fly into France for his crimes, obſerved on his return the diſcontents of the people; and he laid on them the foundation of projects, which were at firſt attended with ſurpriſing ſucceſs. He took the name of John Mortimer, intending, as is ſuppoſed, to paſs himſelf for a ſon of that Sir John Mortimer, who had been ſentenced to death by parliament, and executed in the beginning of this reign, without any trial or evidence, merely upon an indictment of high treaſon, given in againſt him [g]. On the firſt mention of that popular name, the common people of Kent, to the number of 20,000, flocked to Cade's ſtandard; and he excited their zeal, by publiſhing complaints againſt the numerous abuſes of government, and demanding redreſs of their grievances. The court, not yet fully ſenſible of the danger, ſent a ſmall force againſt the rioters, under the command of Sir Humphrey Stafford, who was de-

Popular inſurrection.

[g] Stowe, p. 364. Cotton, p. 564. This author admires, that ſuch a piece of injuſtice ſhould have been committed in peaceable times: He might have added, and by ſuch virtuous princes as Bedford and Gloceſter. But it is to be preſumed, that Mortimer was guilty; tho' his condemnation was highly irregular and illegal. The people had at this time a very feeble ſenſe of law and a conſtitution; and power was very imperfectly reſtrained by theſe limits. When the proceedings of a parliament were ſo irregular, it is eaſy to imagine, that thoſe of a king would be more ſo.

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feated and ſlain in an action near Sevenoke [h]; and Cade, advancing with his followers towards London, encamped on Black-heath. Tho' elated by his victory, he ſtill maintained the appearance of moderation; and ſending the court a very plauſible liſt of grievances [i], he promiſed, that when theſe were redreſſed, and when lord Say, the treaſurer, and Cromer, high ſheriff of Kent, were puniſhed for their malverſations, he would immediately lay down his arms. The council, who obſerved, that nobody was willing to fight againſt men ſo reaſonable in their pretenſions, carried the King, for preſent ſafety, to Kenilworth; and the city immediately opened their gates to Cade, who maintained, during ſome time, great order and diſcipline among his followers. He always led them out into the fields during the night-time; and publiſhed ſevere edicts againſt plunder and violence of every kind: But being obliged, in order to gratify their malevolence againſt Say and Cromer, to put theſe miniſters to death without a legal trial [k]; he found, that, after the commiſſion of this crime, he was no longer maſter of their riotous diſpoſition, and that all his orders were neglected [l]. They broke into a rich houſe, which they plundered; and the citizens, alarmed with this act of violence, ſhut their gates againſt them, and being ſeconded by a detachment of ſoldiers, ſent them by lord Scales, governor of the tower, they repulſed the rebels with great ſlaughter [m]. The Kentiſhmen were ſo diſcouraged with this blow, that, upon receiving a general pardon from the primate then chancellor, they retreated towards Rocheſter, and then diſperſed. The pardon was ſoon after annulled, as being extorted by violence: A price was ſet on Cade's head [n], who was killed by one

[h] Hall, fol. 159. Holingſhed, p. 634. [i] Stowe, p. 388, 389. Holingſhed, p. 633. [k] Grafton, p. 612. [l] Hall, fol. 160. [m] Hiſt. Croyl. contin. p. 526. [n] Rymer, vol. xi. p. 275.

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Iden, a gentleman of Suſſex; and many of his followers were capitally puniſhed for their rebellion.

1450. It was imagined by the court, that the duke of York had ſecretly inſtigated Cade to this attempt, in order to make an experiment of the diſpoſitions of the people towards his title and family [o]: And as the trial had ſucceeded to his wiſh, the ruling party had greater reaſon than ever to apprehend the future conſequences of his pretenſions. At the ſame time, they heard that he intended to return from Ireland; and fearing, that he meant to bring an armed force along with him, they iſſued orders, in the King's name, for oppoſing him, and for refuſing him acceſs into England [p]. But the duke diſarmed his enemies by coming attended with no more than his ordinary retinue: The precautions of the miniſters ſerved only to ſhew him their jealouſy and malignity againſt him: He was ſenſible, that his title, by being dangerous to the King, was alſo become dangerous to himſelf: He now ſaw the impoſſibility of remaining in his preſent ſituation, and the neceſſity of proceeding forward in ſupport of his claim. His partizans, therefore, were inſtructed to maintain in all companies, his right by ſucceſſion, and by the eſtabliſhed laws and conſtitution of the kingdom: Theſe queſtions became every day more and more the ſubject of converſation: The minds of men were inſenſibly ſharpened againſt each other by diſputes, before they came to more dangerous extremities: And various topics were pleaded in ſupport of the pretenſions of each party.

The parties of Lancaſter and York.

The partizans of the houſe of Lancaſter maintained, that tho' the exaltation of Henry IV. might at firſt be deemed ſomewhat irregular, and could not be juſtified

[o] Cotton, p. 661. Stowe, p. 391. [p] Stowe, p. 394.

by

by any of thoſe principles, on which that prince choſe to reſt his title, it was yet founded on general conſent, was a national act, and was derived from the voluntary approbation of a free people, who, being looſened from their allegiance by the tyranny of the preceding government, were moved by gratitude, as well as by a ſenſe of public intereſt, to commit the ſceptre into the hands of their deliverer: That even if that eſtabliſhment were allowed to be at firſt invalid, it had acquired ſolidity by time, the only principle which ultimately gives authority to government, and removes thoſe ſcruples, which the irregular ſteps, attending almoſt all revolutions, naturally excite in the minds of the people: That the right of ſucceſſion was a rule admitted only for general good, and for the maintenance of public order; and could never be pleaded to the overthrow of national tranquillity, and the ſubverſion of regular eſtabliſhments: That the principles of liberty, no leſs than the maxims of internal peace, were injured by theſe pretenſions of the houſe of York; and if ſo many re-iterated acts of the legiſlature, by which the crown was entailed on the preſent family, were now invalidated, the Engliſh nation muſt be conſidered, not as a free people who could diſpoſe of their own government, but as a troop of ſlaves, who were implicitly tranſmitted by ſucceſſion from one hand to another: That the nation was bound to allegiance under the houſe of Lancaſter by moral, no leſs than by political duty; and were they to infringe thoſe numerous oaths of fealty, which they had ſworn to Henry and his predeceſſors, they would thenceforth be ſo thrown looſe from all principles, that it would be found difficult ever after to fix and reſtrain them: That the duke of York himſelf had frequently done homage to the King as his lawful ſovereign, and had thereby, in the moſt ſolemn manner, made an indirect renunciation of thoſe claims,

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with which he now dared to disturb the tranquillity of the public: That even tho' the violation of the rights of blood, made on the deposition of Richard, was perhaps rash and imprudent, it was now too late to remedy the mischief; the danger of a disputed succession could no longer be obviated; the people, accustomed to a government, which, in the hands of the late King, had been so glorious, and in that of his predecessor, so prudent and salutary, would still ascribe a right to it; by causing multiplied disorders, and by shedding an inundation of blood, the advantage would only be obtained, of exchanging one pretender for another; and the house of York itself, if established on the throne, would, on the first opportunity, be exposed to those revolutions, which the giddy spirit, excited in the people, gave so much reason to apprehend: And that tho' the present King enjoyed not the shining talents, which had appeared in his father and grandfather, he might still have a son, who should be endowed with them; he was himself eminent for the most harmless and inoffensive manners; and if active princes were dethroned on pretence of tyranny, and indolent ones on the plea of incapacity, there would thenceforth remain in the constitution no settled and established rule of obedience to any sovereign.

THESE strong topics in favour of the house of Lancaster, were opposed by arguments no less convincing on the side of the house of York. The partizans of this latter family asserted, that the maintenance of order in the succession of princes, so far from incroaching on the rights of the people, or invalidating their fundamental title to good government, was established only for the purposes of government, and served to prevent those numberless confusions, which must ensue, if no rule was followed but the uncertain and disputed views of present convenience and advantage: That the same maxims, which

which enſured the public peace, were alſo ſalutary to national liberty; the privileges of the people could only be maintained by the obſervance of laws; and if no account was made of the rights of the ſovereign, it could leſs be expected, that any regard would be paid to the property and freedom of the ſubject: That it was never too late to correct any pernicious precedent; an unjuſt eſtabliſhment, the longer it ſtood, acquired the greater ſanction and validity; it could, with more appearance of reaſon, be pleaded as an authority for a like injuſtice; and the maintenance of it, inſtead of favouring public tranquillity, tended to disjoint every principle by which human ſociety was ſupported: That uſurpers would be happy, if their preſent poſſeſſion of power, or their continuance for a few years, could convert them into legal princes; but nothing would be more miſerable than the people, if all reſtraints on violence and ambition were thus removed, and a full ſcope given to the attempts of every turbulent innovator: That time indeed beſtowed a ſolidity on government, whoſe firſt foundation was the moſt infirm; but it required a long courſe of time to operate this effect, and the total extinction of thoſe claimants, whoſe title was built on the original principles of the conſtitution: That the depoſition of Richard, and the advancement of Henry IV. were not deliberate national acts; but the reſult of the levity and violence of the people, and proceeded from thoſe very defects in human nature, which the eſtabliſhment of political ſociety, and of an order in ſucceſſion, was calculated to prevent: That the ſubſequent entails of the crown were a continuance of the ſame violence and uſurpation; they were not ratified by the legiſlature, ſince the conſent of the rightful King was ſtill wanting; and the acquieſcence, firſt of the family of Mortimer, then of the family of York, proceeded from preſent neceſſity, and implied no renunciation of their pretenſions: That the reſtoration

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of that order of ſucceſſion, could not be conſidered as a change, which familiarized the people to revolutions; but as a correction of former changes, which had itſelf encouraged the giddy ſpirit of innovation, rebellion, and diſobedience: And that as the original title of Lancaſter ſtood only, in the perſon of Henry IV. on preſent convenience, even this principle, unjuſtifiable as it was, when not ſupported by laws, and warranted by the conſtitution, had now entirely gone over to the other ſide; nor was there any compariſon between a prince utterly unable to ſway the ſcepter, and governed entirely by corrupt miniſters, or by an imperious Queen, engaged in foreign and hoſtile intereſts; and a prince of mature years, of approved wiſdom and experience, a native of England, the lineal heir of the crown, who by his reſtoration would replace every thing on their antient foundations.

So many plauſible arguments could be urged on both ſides of this intereſting queſtion, that the people were extremely divided in their ſentiments; and tho' the noblemen of greateſt power and influence ſeem to have embraced the party of York, the oppoſite cauſe had the advantage of being ſupported by the preſent laws, and by the immediate poſſeſſion of royal authority. There were alſo many great noblemen of the Lancaſtrian party, who balanced the power of their antagoniſts; and kept the nation in ſuſpence between them. The earl of Northumberland adhered to the preſent government: The earl of Weſtmoreland, in ſpite of his connections with the duke of York, and with the family of Nevil, of which he was the head, was brought over to the ſame party; and the whole north of England, the moſt warlike part of the kingdom, was, by means of theſe two potent noblemen, engaged warmly in the intereſts of Lancaſter. Edmund Beaufort, duke of Somerſet, and his brother Henry, were great ſupports of that cauſe; as were alſo Henry Holland, duke of Exeter, Stafford,

Stafford, duke of Buckingham, the earl of Shrewſbury, the lords Clifford, Dudley, Scales, Audley, and other noblemen. CHAP. XXI. 1450.

WHILE the kingdom was in this ſituation, it might naturally be expected, that ſo many turbulent barons, poſſeſſed of ſo much independant authority, would immediately have flown to arms, and have decided the quarrel, after their uſual manner, by war and battle, under the ſtandard of the contending princes. But there were ſtill many cauſes, which retarded theſe deſperate extremities, and made a long train of faction, intrigue and cabal, precede the military operations. By the gradual progreſs of arts in England, as well as in other parts of Europe, the people were now become of ſome conſequence; laws were beginning to be reſpected by them; and it was requiſite, by various pretences, previouſly to reconcile their minds to the overthrow of ſuch an antient eſtabliſhment as that of the houſe of Lancaſter, ere their concurrence could reaſonably be expected. The duke of York himſelf, the new claimant, was of a very moderate and cautious character, an enemy to violence, and inclined to truſt rather to time and policy, than to ſanguinary meaſures, for the ſucceſs of his pretenſions. The very imbecillity itſelf of Henry tended to keep the factions in ſuſpence, and make them ſtand long in awe of each other: It rendered the Lancaſtrian party unable to ſtrike any violent blow againſt their enemies; it encouraged the Yorkiſts to hope, that, after baniſhing the King's miniſters, and getting poſſeſſion of his perſon, they might gradually undermine his authority, and be able, without the perilous experiment of a civil war, to change the ſucceſſion, by parliamentary and legal authority.

THE diſpoſition, which appeared in a parliament, aſſembled ſoon after the arrival of the duke of York from Ireland, favoured 1451. 6th Nov.

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1451. favoured theſe expectations, and both diſcovered an unuſual boldneſs in the commons, and were a proof of the general diſcontents which prevailed againſt the adminiſtration. The lower houſe, without any previous enquiry or examination, without alledging any other cauſe than common fame, ventured to preſent an addreſs againſt the duke of Somerſet, the dutcheſs of Suffolk, the biſhop of Cheſter, Sir John Sutton lord Dudley, and ſeveral others of inferior rank; and they prayed the King to remove them for ever from his perſon and councils, and to prohibit them from approaching within twelve miles of the court [a]. This was a violent attack, ſomewhat arbitrary, and ſupported but by few precedents, againſt the miniſtry; yet the King durſt not entirely and openly oppoſe it: He replied, that, except the lords, he would baniſh all the others from court during a year, unleſs he had occaſion for their aſſiſtance in ſuppreſſing any rebellion. At the ſame time, he rejected a bill, which had paſſed both houſes for attainting the late duke of Suffolk, and which diſcovered a very general prejudice againſt the meaſures of the court.

1452. The firſt armament of the duke of York.

THE duke of York, truſting to theſe ſymptoms, raiſed an army of 10,000 men, with which he marched towards London; demanding a reformation of the government, and the removal of the duke of Somerſet from all his power and authority [b]. He found unexpectedly the gates of the city ſhut againſt him; and on his retreating into Kent, he was followed by the King at the head of a ſuperior army; in which ſeveral of Richard's friends, particularly Saliſbury and Warwic appeared; probably with a view of mediating between the parties, and of ſeconding, on occaſion, the duke of

[a] Parliamentary Hiſtory, vol. ii. p. 263. [b] Stowe, p. 394.

York's

York's pretenſions. A parley enſued; Richard ſtill inſiſted upon the removal of Somerſet, and his ſubmitting to a trial in parliament: The court pretended to comply with his demand; and that nobleman was put under arreſt: The duke of York was then perſuaded to pay his reſpects to the King in his tent; and on repeating his charge againſt the duke of Somerſet, he was ſurprized to ſee that miniſter ſtep from behind the curtain, and offer to juſtify his innocence. Richard now found, that he was betrayed; that he was in the hands of his enemies; and that it was become neceſſary, for his own ſafety, to lower his pretenſions. No violence, however, was attempted againſt him: The nation was not in a diſpoſition to bear the deſtruction of ſo popular a prince: He had many friends in Henry's army: And his ſon, who was not in the power of the court, might ſtill be able to revenge his death on all his enemies: He was therefore diſmiſſed; and he retired to his ſeat at Wigmore on the borders of Wales [c]. CHAP. XXI. 1452.

WHILE the duke of York lived in this retreat, there happened an incident, which, by encreaſing the public diſcontents, proved favourable to his hopes. Several Gaſcon lords, affectionate to the Engliſh government, and diſguſted with the new dominion of the French, came to London, and offered to return to their allegiance under Henry [d]. The earl of Shrewſbury, with a body of 8000 men, was ſent over to ſupport them. Bourdeaux opened its gates to him: He made himſelf maſter of Fronſac, Caſtillon, and ſome other places: His affairs bore for ſome time a proſperous aſpect: But as King Charles haſtened to reſiſt this dangerous invaſion, the fortunes of the Engliſh were then reverſed; Shrewſbury, a venerable warrior above eighty years of age, was killed in battle; his conqueſts were loſt; Bourdeaux was 1453. 20th July

[c] Grafton, p. 620.

[d] Hollingſhed, p. 640.

again

CHAP. XXI.

1453. again obliged to ſubmit to the French King [e]; and all hopes of recovering that province were for ever extinguiſhed.

THO' the Engliſh might deem themſelves happy to be fairly rid of diſtant dominions, which were of no uſe to them, and which they never could defend againſt the growing power of France; they expreſſed great diſcontent on this occaſion; and they threw all the blame on the miniſtry, who had not been able to effect impoſſibilities. While they were in this diſpoſition, the birth of a ſon to Henry, who was baptized under the name of Edward, was deemed no joyful incident; and as it removed all hopes of the peaceable ſucceſſion of the duke of York, who was otherwiſe, in the right of his father, and by the laws enacted ſince the acceſſion of the houſe of Lancaſter, next heir to the crown, it had rather a tendency to inflame the quarrel between the parties. But the duke was incapable of violent councils; and even when no viſible obſtacle lay between him and the throne, he was prevented by his own ſcruples from mounting it. Henry, always unfit to exerciſe the government, fell at this time into a diſtemper, which ſo far encreaſed his natural imbecillity, that it rendered him incapable of maintaining even the appearance of royalty. The Queen and the council, deſtitute of this ſupport, found themſelves unable to reſiſt the York party; and they were obliged to yield to the torrent. They ſent Somerſet to the Tower; and appointed Richard lieutenant of the kingdom, with powers to open and hold a ſeſſion of parliament [f]. That aſſembly alſo, taking into conſideration the ſtate of the kingdom, created him protector during pleaſure. Men, who thus entruſted royal authority to one, who had ſuch evident and ſtrong

13 October.

1454.

[e] Polyd. Virg. p. 501. Grafton, p. 623.

[f] Rymer, vol. xi. p. 344.

preten-

pretenſions to the crown, were not ſurely averſe to his taking immediate and full poſſeſſion of it. Yet the duke, inſtead of puſhing them to make farther conceſſions, appeared ſomewhat timid and irreſolute even in receiving that power which was tendered to him. He deſired, that it might be recorded in parliament, that this authority was conferred on him of their own free motion, without any application on his part: He expreſſed his hopes, that they would aſſiſt him in the exerciſe of it: He made it a condition of his acceptance, that the other lords, who were appointed to be of his council, ſhould alſo accept of that truſt, and ſhould exerciſe it: And he required, that all the powers of his office ſhould be ſpecified and defined by act of parliament. This moderation of Richard was certainly very unuſual and very amiable; but it was attended with bad conſequences in the preſent ſtate of affairs, and by giving time for the animoſities of faction to ariſe and ferment, it proved the ſource of all thoſe furious wars and commotions, which enſued. CHAP. XXI. 1454.

THE enemies of the duke of York ſoon found it in their power to make advantage of his exceſſive caution. Henry having ſo far recovered from his diſtemper, as to carry the appearance of exerciſing the royal power; they moved him to reſume his authority, to annul the regency of the duke, to releaſe Somerſet from the Tower [g], and to commit the adminiſtration into the hands of that nobleman. Richard, ſenſible of the dangers, which might attend his former acceptance of the parliamentary commiſſion, ſhould he ſubmit to the annulling of it, levied an army; but ſtill without advancing any pretenſions to the crown. He complained only of the King's miniſters, and demanded a reforma- 1455.

[g] Rymer, vol. xi. p. 361. Hollingſhed, p. 642. Grafton, p. 626.

CHAP. XXI.

1455.

tion of the government. A battle was fought at St. Albans, in which the Yorkiſts were ſuperior, and without ſuffering any loſs on their ſide, ſlew above 5000 of their enemies; among whom were the duke of Somerſet, the earl of Northumberland, the earl of Stafford, eldeſt ſon to the duke of Buckingham, lord Clifford, and many other perſons of diſtinction [h]. The King himſelf fell into the hands of the duke of York, who treated him with great reſpect and tenderneſs: He was only obliged (which he regarded as no hardſhip) to commit the whole authority of the crown into the hands of his rival.

First battle of St. Albans. 22d May.

THIS was the firſt blood ſpilt in that fatal quarrel, which was not finiſhed in leſs than a courſe of thirty years, which was ſignalized by twelve pitched battles, which opened a ſcene of extraordinary fierceneſs and cruelty, is computed to have coſt the lives of eighty princes of the blood, and almoſt entirely annihilated the antient nobility of England. The ſtrong attachments, which, at that time, men of the ſame kindred bore to each other, and the vindictive ſpirit which was conſidered as a point of honour, rendered the great families implacable in their reſentments, and widened every moment the breach between the parties. Yet affairs did not immediately proceed to the laſt extremities: The nation was kept for ſome time in ſuſpenſe: The vigour and ſpirit of Queen Margaret, ſupporting her ſmall power, ſtill proved a balance to the great authority of Richard, which was checked by his irreſolute temper. A parliament, which was ſoon after aſſembled, diſcovered plainly by the contrariety of their proceedings, the contrariety of the motives by which they were actuated. They granted the Yorkiſts a general indemnity; and they reſtored the protectorſhip to the duke, who in accepting it,

9th July.

[h] Stowe, p. 399. Hollingſhed, p. 643.

ſtill

still persevered in all his former precautions: But at the same time, they renewed their oaths of fealty to Henry, and fixed the continuance of the protectorship to the majority of his eldest son Edward, who was vested in the usual dignities of prince of Wales, duke of Cornwal, and earl of Chester. The only decisive act, passed by this parliament, was a full resumption of all the grants, which had been made since the death of Henry V. and which had reduced the crown to the most scandalous poverty. CHAP. XXI. 1455.

It was not found difficult to wrest power from hands so little tenacious as those of the duke of York. Margaret, availing herself of that prince's absence, produced her husband before the house of lords; and as his state of health permitted him at that time to act his part with some tolerable decency, he declared his intentions to resume the government, and to put an end to Richard's authority. This measure, being unexpected, was not opposed by the contrary party: The house of lords, who were many of them disgusted with the late act of resumption, assented to Henry's proposal: And the King was accordingly declared to be reinstated in his sovereign authority. The duke of York even acquiesced in this irregular act of the peers; and no disturbance ensued. But that prince's claim to the crown was too well known, and the steps, which he had taken to promote it, were too evident, ever to allow sincere trust and confidence to have place between the parties. The court retired to Coventry, and invited the duke of York and the earls of Salisbury and Warwic to attend the King's person. As they were on the road, they received intelligence, that designs were formed by their enemies against their liberties and lives. They immediately separated themselves: Richard withdrew to his castle of Wigmore in the county 1456. 1457.

CHAP. XXI.

of Hereford: Saliſbury to Middleham in Yorkſhire; And Warwic to his government of Calais, which had
1457. been committed to him after the battle of St. Albans, and which, as it gave him the command of the only regular military force maintained by England, was of the utmoſt importance in the preſent juncture. Still, men of peaceable diſpoſitions, and among the reſt Bourchier, archbiſhop of Canterbury, thought it not too late to interpoſe with their good offices, in order to prevent that effuſion of blood, with which the kingdom was threatened; and the awe, in which each party ſtood of the other, rendered their mediation for ſome time ſucceſsful. It was agreed, that all the great leaders on both ſides ſhould meet in London, and be ſolemnly reconciled.
1458. The duke of York and his partizans came thither with numerous retinues, and took up their quarters near each other for mutual ſecurity. The chieftains of the Lancaſtrian party uſed the ſame precaution. The mayor, at the head of 5000 men, kept a ſtrict guard, night and day; and was extremely vigilant in maintaining peace between them [h]. Terms were adjuſted, which took not away the ground of difference. An outward reconciliation only was procured: And in order to notify this accord to the whole people, a ſolemn proceſſion to St. Paul's was appointed, where the duke of York led Queen Margaret, and a chieftain of one party marched hand in hand with a chieftain of the oppoſite [i]. The leſs real cordiality prevailed, the more were the exterior demonſtrations of friendſhip and amity redoubled. But it was evident to all men of ſenſe, that a conteſt for a crown could not thus be peaceably accommodated; that

[h] Fabian Chron. anno 1458. The author ſays, that ſome lords brought 900 retainers, ſome 600, none leſs than 400. See alſo Grafton, p. 633.

[i] Hollingſhed, p. 648. Polyd. Virg. p. 506. Grafton, p. 634.

each

each party only watched for an opportunity of ſubverting the other; and that much blood muſt yet be ſpilt, ere the nation could be reſtored to perfect tranquillity, or enjoy a ſettled and eſtabliſhed government. CHAP. XXI. 1458.

EVEN the ſmalleſt accident, without any formed deſign, was ſufficient, in the preſent diſpoſition of mens minds, to diſſolve the ſeeming amity between the parties; and had the intentions of the leaders been ever ſo amicable, they would have found it difficult to reſtrain the animoſity of their followers. One of the King's retinue inſulted one of the earl of Warwic's: Their companions on each ſide took part in the quarrel: A fierce combat enſued: The earl apprehended his life to be aimed at: He fled over to his government at Calais [k]; and both parties, in every county of England, openly made preparations for deciding the conteſt by war and arms. 1459.

THE earl of Saliſbury, marching to join the duke of York, was overtaken, at Blore-heath on the borders of Staffordſhire, by lord Audley, who commanded much ſuperior forces; and a ſmall rivulet with ſteep banks ran between the two armies. Saliſbury here ſupplied his defect in numbers by ſtratagem; a refinement, of which there occur few inſtances in the Engliſh civil wars, where a headlong courage, more than military conduct, is commonly to be remarked. He feigned a retreat, and allured Audley to follow him with precipitation: But when part of the royal army had paſſed the brook, Saliſbury ſuddenly turned upon them; and partly by the ſurprize, partly by the diviſion of the enemies forces, put them to rout: The example of flight was followed by the reſt of the army: And Saliſbury, obtaining a Battle of Blore-heath. 23d Sept.

[k] Graſton, p. 635.

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complete victory, reached the general rendezvous of the Yorkiſts at Ludlow [l].

1459. THE earl of Warwic brought over to this rendezvous a choice body of veterans from Calais, on whom, it was thought, the fortune of the war would much depend; but this reinforcement proved, in the iſſue, the ruin of the duke of York's party. When the royal army approached, and a general action was every hour expected, Sir Andrew Trollop, who commanded the veterans, deſerted to the King in the night-time; and the Yorkiſts were ſo diſmayed by this inſtance of treachery, which made every man apprehenſive of his fellow, that they ſeparated next day without ſtriking a ſtroke [m]: The duke of York fled to Ireland: The earl of Warwic, attended by many of the other leaders, eſcaped to his government of Calais; where his great popularity among all orders of men in the kingdom, particularly among the military, ſoon drew to him partizans, and rendered his power very formidable. The friends of the houſe of York in England kept themſelves every where in readineſs to riſe on the firſt ſummons from their leaders.

1460. AFTER meeting with ſome ſucceſſes at ſea, Warwic landed in Kent, with the earl of Saliſbury, and the earl of Marche, eldeſt ſon to the duke of York; and being met by the primate, the lord Cobham, and other perſons of diſtinction, he marched, amidſt the acclamations of the people, to London. The city immediately opened its gates to him; and his troops encreaſing on every day's march, he ſoon found himſelf in a condition to face the royal army, which haſtened from Coventry to attack him. The battle was fought at Northampton; and was ſoon decided againſt the royaliſts by

Battle of Northampton. 10th July.

[l] Hollingſhed, p. 649. Grafton, p. 936.

[m] Hollingſhed, p. 650. Grafton, p. 537.

the infidelity of lord Grey of Ruthin, who, commanding Henry's vanguard, deſerted to the enemy during the heat of action, and ſpread a conſternation thro' the troops. The duke of Buckingham, the earl of Shrewſbury, the lords Beaumont and Egremont, and Sir William Lucie were killed in the action or purſuit: The ſlaughter fell chiefly on the gentry and nobility; the common people were ſpared by orders of the earls of Warwic and Marche [n]. Henry himſelf, that empty ſhadow of a King, was again taken priſoner; and as the innocence and ſimplicity of his manners, which bore the appearance of ſanctity, had procured him the tender regard of the people [o], the earl of Warwic and the other leaders took care to diſtinguiſh themſelves by their reſpectful demeanour towards him. CHAP. XXI. 1460.

A PARLIAMENT was ſummoned in the King's name, and met at Weſtminſter; where the duke of York ſoon after appeared from Ireland. This prince had never hitherto advanced openly any claim to the crown: He had only complained of ill miniſters, and demanded a redreſs of grievances: And even in the preſent criſis, when the parliament was ſurrounded by his victorious army, he ſhowed ſuch a regard to law and liberty, as is very unuſual during the prevalence of a party in any civil diſſenſions; and was ſtill leſs to be expected, in thoſe violent and licentious times. He advanced towards the throne; and being met by the archbiſhop of Canterbury, who aſked him, whether he had yet paid his reſpects to the King? he replied, that he knew of none to whom he owed that title. He then ſtood near the throne [p], and addreſſing himſelf to the houſe of peers, he gave them a deduction of his title by deſcent, mentioned the cruelties by which the houſe of Lancaſter had paved at firſt their way to ſo- A parliament. 7th Oct.

[n] Stowe, p. 409.
[o] Hall, fol. 169. Grafton, p. 595.
[p] Hollingſhed, p. 655.

CHAP. XXI.

1460.

vereign power, inſiſted on the calamities which had attended the government of Henry, exhorted them to return into the right path, by doing juſtice to the lineal ſucceſſor, and thus pleaded his cauſe before them as his natural and lawful judges [q]. This cool and moderate manner of demanding a crown, intimidated his friends and encouraged his enemies: The lords remained in ſuſpence [r]; and no one ventured to utter a word on this occaſion. Richard, who had probably expected, that the peers would have invited him to place himſelf on the throne, was much diſappointed at their ſilence; but deſiring them to reflect on what he had propoſed to them, he departed the houſe. The peers took the matter under conſideration, with as great tranquillity as if it had been a common ſubject of debate: They deſired the aſſiſtance of ſome conſiderable members among the commons in their deliberations: They heard, in ſeveral ſucceſſive days, the reaſons alledged for the duke of York: They even ventured to propoſe objections to his claim, founded on former entails of the crown, and on the oaths of fealty ſworn to the houſe of Lancaſter [s]: They alſo obſerved, that, as Richard had all along born the arms of York, not thoſe of Clarence, he could not claim as ſucceſſor to the latter family: And after receiving anſwers to theſe objections, derived from the violence and power by which the houſe of Lancaſter ſupported their preſent poſſeſſion of the crown; they ventured at laſt to pronounce a deciſion. Their ſentence was calculated, as far as poſſible, to pleaſe both parties: They declared the title of the duke of York to be certain and indefeaſible; but in conſideration, that Henry had enjoyed the crown, without diſpute or controverſy, during the courſe of thirty-eight years, they determined that he

[q] Cotton, p. 665. Grafton, p. 643.

[r] Hollingſhed, p. 657. Grafton, p. 645.

[s] Cotton, p. 666.

ſhould

ſhould continue to poſſeſs the title and dignity during the remainder of his life; that the adminiſtration of the government, meanwhile, ſhould remain with Richard, that he ſhould be acknowledged the true and lawful heir of the monarchy, that every one ſhould ſwear to maintain his ſucceſſion, that it ſhould be treaſon to attempt his life, and that all former ſettlements of the crown, in this and the two laſt reigns, ſhould be abrogated and reſcinded [z]. The duke of York acquieſced in this deciſion: Henry himſelf, being a priſoner, could not oppoſe it: Even if he had enjoyed his liberty, he would not probably have felt any violent reluctance againſt it: And the act thus paſſed with the unanimous conſent of the whole legiſlative body. Tho' the mildneſs of this compromiſe is chiefly to be aſcribed to the moderation of the duke of York, it is impoſſible not to obſerve in thoſe tranſactions viſible marks of a higher regard to law, and a more fixed authority, enjoyed by parliament, than has appeared in any former period of Engliſh hiſtory. CHAP. XXI. 1460.

It is probable, that the duke of York, without employing either menaces or violence, could have obtained from the commons a ſettlement more conſiſtent and uniform: But as many, if not all the members of the upper houſe, had received grants, conceſſions, or dignities, during the laſt ſixty years, when the houſe of Lancaſter was poſſeſſed of the government, they were afraid of invalidating their own titles by too ſudden and violent an overthrow of that family; and in thus temporizing between the parties, they fixed the throne on a baſis, upon which it could not poſſibly ſtand. The duke, apprehending his chief danger to ariſe from the genius and ſpirit of Queen Margaret, ſought a pretence for baniſhing her entirely the kingdom; and for that purpoſe, he

[z] Cotton, p. 666. Grafton, p. 647.

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1460.

ſent her, in the King's name, a ſummons to come immediately to London; intending, in caſe of her diſobedience, to proceed to extremities againſt her. But the queen needed not this menace to excite her activity in behalf of the rights of her family. After the defeat at Northampton, ſhe had fled with her infant ſon to Durham, and from thence to Scotland; but ſoon returning, ſhe applied to the northern barons, and employed every motive to procure their aſſiſtance. Her affability, inſinuation, and addreſs, qualities in which ſhe excelled; her careſſes, her promiſes wrought a powerful effect on every one who approached her: The admiration of her great qualities was ſucceeded by compaſſion towards her helpleſs condition: The nobility of that quarter, who regarded themſelves as the moſt warlike of the kingdom, were moved by indignation to find the ſouthern barons diſpoſe of the crown and ſettle the government: And that they might allure the people to their ſtandard, they promiſed them the ſpoils of all the provinces on the other ſide the Trent. By theſe means, the Queen had collected an army twenty thouſand ſtrong, with a celerity which was neither expected by her friends, nor apprehended by her enemies.

THE duke of York, informed of her appearance in the north, haſtened thither with a body of 5000 men, to ſuppreſs, as he imagined, the beginnings of an inſurrection; when, on his arrival at Wakefield, he found himſelf ſo much out-numbered by his enemies. He threw himſelf into Sandal caſtle, which was ſituated in the neighbourhood; and he was adviſed by the earl of Saliſbury, and other prudent counſellors, to remain in that fortreſs, till his ſon, the earl of Marche, who was levying forces in the borders of Wales, could advance to his aſſiſtance[a]. But the duke, tho' deficient in political

[a] Stowe, p. 412.

courage,

courage, poſſeſſed perſonal bravery to an eminent degree; and notwithſtanding all his wiſdom and experience, he thought, that he ſhould be forever diſgraced, if, by taking ſhelter behind walls, he ſhould for a moment reſign the victory to a woman. He deſcended into the plain, and offered battle to the enemy, which was inſtantly accepted. The great inequality of number was ſufficient alone to decide the victory; but the Queen, by ſending a detachment, who fell on the back of the duke's army, rendered her advantage ſtill more certain and undiſputed. The duke himſelf was killed in the action; and as his body was found among the ſlain, the head was cut off by Margaret's orders, and fixed on the gates of York, with a paper crown upon it, in deriſion of his pretended title. His ſon, the earl of Rutland, a youth of ſeventeen, was brought to lord Clifford; and that barbarian, in revenge of his father's death, who had periſhed in the battle of St. Alban's, murdered, in cold blood, and with his own hands, this innocent prince, whoſe exterior figure, as well as other accompliſhments, are repreſented by hiſtorians as extremely amiable. The earl of Saliſbury was wounded and taken priſoner, and immediately beheaded, with ſeveral other perſons of diſtinction, by martial law at Pomfret [b]. There fell near three thouſand of the Yorkiſts in this battle: The duke himſelf was greatly and juſtly lamented by his own party; a prince who ſurely merited a better fate, and whoſe errors in conduct proceeded entirely from ſuch qualities, as render him the more an object of eſteem and affection. He periſhed in the fiftieth year of his age, and left behind him three ſons, Edward, George, and Richard, with three daughters, Anne, Elizabeth, and Margaret.

CHAP. XXI. 1460.

Battle of Wakefield. 24th Dec.

Death of the Duke of York.

[b] Polyd. Virg. p. 510.

THE

CHAP. XXI.

1461.

THE queen, after this important victory, divided her army; and ſent the ſmaller diviſion under Jaſper Tudor, earl of Pembroke, half brother to the King, againſt Edward, the preſent duke of York. She marched herſelf with the larger diviſion towards London, where the earl of Warwic was left with the command of the Yorkiſts. Pembroke was defeated by Edward at Mortimer's Croſs in Hereſordſhire with the loſs of near 4000 men: His army was diſperſed; he himſelf eſcaped by flight; but his father, Sir Owen Tudor, was taken priſoner, and immediately beheaded by Edward's orders. This barbarous practice, being once begun, was continued by both parties, from revenge, which covered itſelf under the pretence of retaliation [c].

Battle of Mortimer's croſs.

MARGARET compenſated this defeat by a victory which ſhe obtained over the earl of Warwic. That nobleman, on the approach of the Lancaſtrians, led out his army, re-inforced by a ſtrong body of the Londoners, who were very affectionate to his cauſe; and he gave battle to the Queen at St. Albans. While the armies were warmly engaged, Lovelace, who commanded a conſiderable body of the Yorkiſts, treacherouſly withdrew from the combat; and this diſhonourable action, of which there are many inſtances in theſe civil wars, decided the victory in favour of the Queen. About 2300 of the Yorkiſts periſhed in the battle and flight; and the perſon of the King fell again into the hands of his own party. This weak prince was ſure to be almoſt equally a priſoner whichever party had the keeping of him; and ſcarce any more decorum was obſerved by the one than by the other in their method of treating him. Lord Bonville, to whoſe care he had been entruſted, ſtaid with him after the defeat, on aſſurance of pardon, given him

Second battle of St. Albans.

[c] Holingſhed, p. 660. Graſton, p. 650.

by

by Henry: But Margaret, regardleſs of her huſband's promiſe, ordered immediately the head of that nobleman to be ſtruck off by the executioner [d]. Sir Thomas Kiriel, a brave warrior, who had ſignalized himſelf in the French wars, was treated in the ſame inhuman manner. CHAP. XXI. 1461.

THE Queen made no great advantage of this victory: Young Edward advanced upon her from the other ſide; and collecting the remains of Warwic's army, was ſoon in a condition of giving her battle with ſuperior forces. She was ſenſible of her danger, if ſhe lay between the enemy and the city of London; and ſhe found it neceſſary to retreat with her army to the north [e]. Edward entered London amidſt the acclamations of the citizens, and immediately opened a new ſcene to his party. This prince, in the bloom of youth, remarkable for the beauty of his perſon, for his bravery, his activity, his affability, and every popular quality, found himſelf ſo much poſſeſſed of public favour, that, elated with the ſpirit natural to his age, he reſolved no longer to confine himſelf within thoſe narrow limits, which his father had preſcribed to himſelf, and which had been found by experience ſo prejudicial to his cauſe. He determined to aſſume the name and dignity of King; to inſiſt openly on his claim; and thenceforth, to treat the oppoſite party as traitors and rebels to his lawful authority. But as a national conſent, or the appearance of it, ſeemed, notwithſtanding his plauſible title, to be ſtill requiſite to precede this bold meaſure, and as the aſſembling a parliament might occaſion too many delays, and be attended with other inconveniencies, he ventured to proceed in a leſs regular manner, and to put it out of the power of his enemies to throw obſtacles in the way of his advancement. His army was ordered to aſſemble in St. John's Fields; infinite numbers of people ſur-

[d] Holingſhed, p. 660. [e] Grafton, p. 652.

rounded

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rounded them; an harangue was pronounced to this mixed multitude, ſetting forth the title of Edward, and inveighing againſt the tyranny and uſurpation of the rival family; and the people were then aſked, whether they would have Henry of Lancaſter for King? They univerſally exclaimed againſt the propoſal. It was then demanded, whether they would accept of Edward, eldeſt ſon of the late duke of York? They expreſſed their conſent with loud and joyful acclamations [f]. A great number of biſhops, lords, magiſtrates, and other perſons of diſtinction, were then aſſembled at Baynard's caſtle, who ratified the popular election; and the new King was next day proclaimed in London, under the name of Edward IV [g].

Edward IV aſſumes the crown.

5th March.

In this manner, finiſhed the reign of Henry VI. a monarch, who, while yet in his cradle, had been proclaimed King both of France and England, and who began his life with the moſt ſplendid proſpects, which any prince in Europe had ever enjoyed. The revolution was unhappy for his people, as it was the ſource of civil wars; but was almoſt entirely indifferent to Henry himſelf, who was utterly incapable of exerciſing his authority, and who, provided he met perſonally with good uſage, was equally eaſy, as he was equally enſlaved, in the hands of his enemies and of his friends. His weakneſs and his diſputed title were the chief cauſes of the public misfortunes: But whether his Queen, and his miniſters, were not guilty of ſome great abuſes of power, it is not eaſy for us at this diſtance to determine: There remain no proofs on record of any conſiderable violation of the laws, except in the death of the duke of Gloceſter, which was a private crime, formed no precedent,

[f] Stowe, p. 415. Holingſhed, p. 661.

[g] Grafton, p. 653.

and

and was but too much of a piece with the uſual ferocity and cruelty of the times.

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Miſcellaneous tranſactions of this reign.

THE moſt remarkable law, which paſſed in this reign, was that for the due election of members of paliament in counties. After the fall of the feudal ſyſtem, the diſtinction of tenures was in a great meaſure loſt; and every freeholder, as well thoſe who held of meſne lords, as the immediate tenants of the crown, were by degrees admitted to give their votes at elections. This innovation was confirmed by a law of Henry IV. [n]; which gave right to ſuch a multitude of electors, as was the occaſion of great diſorder. In the eighth and tenth of this King, therefore, laws were enacted, limiting the electors to ſuch as poſſeſſed forty ſhillings a-year in land, free from all burden, within the county [o]. This ſum was equivalent to near twenty pounds a-year of our preſent money; and it were to be wiſhed, that the ſpirit, as well as letter of this law, had been maintained.

THE preamble of the ſtatute is remarkable: "Where-
"as the elections of knights, have of late, in many
"counties of England, been made by outrageous, and
"exceſſive numbers of people, many of them of ſmall
"ſubſtance and value, yet pretending to a right equal
"to the beſt knights and eſquires; whereby manſlaugh-
"ters, riots, batteries, and diviſions among the gentle-
"men and other people of the ſame counties, ſhall very
"likely riſe and be, unleſs due remedy be provided in
"this behalf, &c." We may learn from theſe expreſſions what an important matter the election of a member of parliament was now become in England: That aſſembly was beginning in this period to aſſume great authority: The commons had it much in their power to enforce the execution of the laws; and if they failed in

[n] Statutes at large, 7 Henry IV. cap. 15.
[o] Ibid. 8 Henry VI. cap. 7. 10 Henry VI. cap. 2.

their

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their duty, in this particular, it proceeded less from any exorbitant power of the crown, than from the licentious spirit of the aristocracy, and perhaps from the rude education of the age, and their own want of a due sense of the advantages resulting from a regular administration of justice.

When the duke of York, the earls of Salisbury and Warwic, fled the kingdom upon the desertion of their troops, a parliament was summoned at Coventry in 1460, by which they were all attainted. This parliament seems to have been very irregularly constituted, and scarcely deserves the name: Insomuch, that an act passed in it, "that all such knights of any county, "as were returned by virtue of the King's letters, "without any other election, should be valid, and that "no sheriff, for returning them, should incur the penalty of the statute of Henry IV." [p] All the acts of that parliament were afterwards reversed; "because it "was unlawfully summoned, and the knights and barons "not duly chosen [q]."

The parliaments in this reign, instead of relaxing their vigilance against the usurpations of the court of Rome, endeavoured to enforce the former statutes enacted to that purpose. The commons petitioned, that no foreigner should be capable of any church preferment, and that the patron might be allowed to present anew upon the non-residence of any incumbent [r]: But the King eluded these petitions. Pope Martin wrote him a severe letter against the statute of provisors; which he calls an abominable statute, that would infallibly damn every one, who observed it [s]. The cardinal of Wincheſter was legate; and being also a kind of prime minister, and im-

[p] Cotton, p. 664.
[q] Statutes at large, 39 Henry VI. cap. 1.
[r] Cotton, p. 585.
[s] Burnet's Collection of Records, vol. i. p. 99.

menſely

menſely rich from the profits of his clerical dignity, the parliament became jealous of his extending the papal power; and they proteſted, that the cardinal ſhould abſent himſelf in all affairs and councils of the King, whenever the Pope or See of Rome was touched upon [t]. CHAP. XXI. 1461.

PERMISSION was given by parliament to export corn when it was at low prices; wheat at ſix ſhillings and eight pence a quarter, money of that age; barley at three ſhillings and four pence [u]. It appears from theſe prices, that corn ſtill remained at about half its preſent value; tho' other commodities were much cheaper. The inland commerce of corn was alſo opened in the eighteenth of the King, by allowing any collector of the cuſtoms to give a licence for carrying it from one county to another [x]. The ſame year a kind of navigation act was propoſed with regard to all places within the Streights; but the King rejected it [y].

THE firſt inſtance of debt contracted upon parliamentary ſecurity occurs in this reign [z].

[t] Cotton, p. 593. [u] Statutes at large, 15 Henry VI. cap. 2. 23 Henry VI. cap. 6. [x] Cotton, p. 625. [y] Ibid. p. 626. [z] Ibid. p. 593. 614. 638.

CHAP.

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CHAP. XXII.

EDWARD IV.

Battle of Touton——Henry escapes into Scotland——A parliament——Battle of Hexham——Henry taken prisoner, and confined to the Tower——King's marriage with the Lady Elizabeth Gray——Warwic disgusted——Alliance with Burgundy——Insurrection in Yorkshire——Battle of Banbury——Warwic and Clarence banished——Warwic and Clarence return——Edward IV. *expelled——Henry* VI. *restored——Edward* IV. *returns—Battle of Barnet, and death of Warwic——Battle of Teukesbury, and murder of Prince Edward——Death of Henry* VI.*——Invasion of France——Peace of Pecquigni——Trial and execution of the duke of Clarence——Death and character of Edward* IV.

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1461. YOUNG Edward, now in his twentieth year, was of a temper well fitted to make his way thro' such a scene of war, havoc, and devastation, as must conduct him to the full possession of that crown, which he claimed from hereditary right, but which he had assumed from the tumultuary election alone of his own party. He was bold, active, enterprizing; and his hardness of heart and severity of character rendered him impregnable to all those movements of compassion, which might relax his vigour in the prosecution of the most bloody revenges against his enemies. The very commencement of his reign gave symptoms of his sanguinary disposition. A tradesman of London, who kept shop at the sign of the crown,

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crown, having ſaid, that he would make his ſon heir to the crown; this harmleſs pleaſantry was interpreted to be ſpoke in deriſion of Edward's aſſumed title; and he was condemned and executed for the offence[a]. Such an act of tyranny was a proper prelude to the ſcenes, which enſued. The ſcaffold, as well as the field, ſtreamed inceſſantly with the nobleſt blood of England, ſpilt in the quarrel between the two contending families, whoſe animoſity was now become implacable. The people, divided in their affections, took alſo oppoſite ſymbols of party: The partizans of the houſe of Lancaſter choſe the red roſe as their mark of diſtinction; thoſe of York were denominated from the white; and theſe civil wars were thus known, all over Europe, by the name of the quarrel between the two roſes.

THE licence, in which queen Margaret had been obliged to indulge her troops, ſtruck a great terror into the city of London and all the ſouthern parts of the kingdom; and as ſhe there expected a very obſtinate reſiſtance, ſhe prudently retired northwards among her own partizans. The ſame licence, joined to the zeal of faction, ſoon brought great multitudes to her ſtandard; and ſhe was able, in a few days, to aſſemble an army ſixty thouſand ſtrong in Yorkſhire. The King and the earl of Warwic made haſte, with an army of forty thouſand, to check her progreſs; and when they reached Pomfret, they diſpatched a body of troops, under the command of the lord Fitzwalter, to ſecure the paſſage of Ferrybridge over the river Are, which lay between them and the enemy. Fitzwalter took poſt at the place aſſigned him; but was not able to defend it againſt lord Clifford, who attacked him with ſuperior numbers. The Yorkiſts were chaſed over the river with great ſlaugh-

[a] Habington in Kennet, p. 431. Grafton, p. 791.

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ter; and lord Fitzwalter himſelf was ſlain in the action [b]. The earl of Warwic, dreading the conſequences of this misfortune, at a time when a deciſive action was every hour expected, immediately ordered his horſe to be brought him, which he ſtabbed before the whole army; and kiſſing the hilt of his ſword, ſwore, that he was determined to ſhare the fate of the meaneſt ſoldier [c]. And to ſhew the greater ſecurity, a proclamation was at the ſame time iſſued, giving to every one who pleaſed full liberty to retire; but menacing the ſevereſt puniſhments to thoſe who ſhould diſcover any ſymptoms of cowardice in the enſuing battle [d]. Lord Falconbridge was ſent to recover the poſt which had been loſt; he paſſed the river ſome miles above Ferrybridge, and falling unexpectedly on lord Clifford, he revenged the former diſaſter by the defeat of the party and the death of their leader [e].

Battle of Touton. 29th of March.

THE two hoſtile armies met at Touton; and a fierce and bloody battle enſued. While the Yorkiſts were advancing to the charge, there happened a great fall of ſnow, which, driving full on the faces of their enemies, blinded them; and this advantage was improved by a ſtratagem of lord Falconbridge. That nobleman ordered ſome infantry to advance before the line, and after having ſent a volley of flight-arrows, as they were called, amidſt the enemy, immediately to retire. The Lancaſtrians, imagining that they were got within reach of the oppoſite army, diſcharged all their arrows, which thus fell ſhort of the Yorkiſts, without doing any execution [f]. After the quivers of the enemy were exhauſted, Edward advanced his line, and committed ſlaughter with impunity on the diſmayed Lancaſtrians: The bow however was ſoon laid aſide, and the ſword decided the combat,

[b] W. Wyrceſter, p. 489. Hall, fol. 186. Holingſhed, p. 664.
[c] Habington, p. 432.
[d] Holingſhed, p. 664.
[e] Hiſt. Croyl. cont. p. 532.
[f] Hall, fol. 186.

which

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which ended in a total victory on the ſide of the Yorkiſts. Edward iſſued orders to give no quarter [g]: The routed army was purſued to Tadcaſter with great bloodſhed and confuſion; and above thirty-ſix thouſand men are computed to have fallen in the battle and purſuit [h]: Among theſe were the earl of Weſtmoreland, and his brother, Sir John Nevil, the earl of Northumberland, the lords Dacres and Welles, and Sir Andrew Trollop [i]. The earl of Devonſhire, who was now engaged in Henry's party, was brought a priſoner to Edward; and was ſoon after beheaded by martial law at York. His head was fixed on a pole erected over the gates of that city; and the head of duke Richard and that of the earl of Saliſbury were taken down, and buried with their bodies. Henry and Margaret had remained at York during the action; but learning the defeat of their army, and being ſenſible, that no place in England could now afford them ſhelter, they fled with great precipitation into Scotland. They were accompanied by the duke of Exeter, who, tho' he had married Edward's ſiſter, had taken part with the Lancaſtrians, and by Henry duke of Somerſet, who had commanded in the unfortunate battle of Touton, and who was the ſon of that nobleman killed in the firſt battle of St. Albans.

Henry eſcapes into Scotland.

NOTWITHSTANDING the great animoſity, which prevailed between the two kingdoms, Scotland had never exerted itſelf with vigour, to take advantage either of the wars which England carried on with France, or of the civil wars which broke out between the contending families. James I. more laudably employed, in civilizing his ſubjects and taming them to the ſalutary yoke of law and juſtice, avoided all hoſtilities with foreign nations;

[g] Habington, p. 432.
[h] Holingſhed, p. 665. Grafton, p. 656. Hiſt. Croyl. cont. p. 533.
[i] Hall, fol. 187. Habington, p. 433.

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and tho' he ſeemed intereſted to maintain a balance between France and England, he gave no farther aſſiſtance to the former kingdom in its greateſt diſtreſſes, than permitting, and perhaps encouraging, his ſubjects to inliſt in the French ſervice. After the murder of that excellent prince, the minority of his ſon and ſucceſſor, James II. and the diſtractions incident to it, retained the Scots in the ſame ſtate of neutrality; and the ſuperiority, viſibly acquired by France, rendered it then unneceſſary for her ally to interpoſe in her defence. But when the quarrel commenced between the houſes of York and Lancaſter, and became abſolutely incurable but by the total extinction of one party; James, who had now riſen to man's eſtate, was tempted to ſeize this advantage, and he endeavoured to recover thoſe places, which the Engliſh had formerly conquered from his anceſtors. He laid ſiege to the caſtle of Roxborough in 1460, and had provided himſelf of a ſmall train of artillery for that enterprize: But his cannon were ſo ill framed, that one of them burſt as he was firing it, and put an end to his life in the flower of his age. His ſon and ſucceſſor, James III. was alſo a minor: The uſual diſtractions enſued in the government: The Queen-dowager, Anne of Gueldres, aſpired to the regency: The family of Douglas oppoſed her pretenſions: And Queen Margaret, when ſhe fled into Scotland, found there a people little leſs divided by faction, than thoſe by whom ſhe had been expelled. Tho' ſhe pleaded the connexions between the royal family of Scotland and the houſe of Lancaſter, by the young King's grandmother, who was a daughter of the earl of Somerſet; ſhe could engage the Scots council to go no farther than to expreſs their good wiſhes in her favour: But on her offer to deliver to them immediately the important fortreſs of Berwic, and to contract her ſon in marriage with a ſiſter of King James, ſhe found a better

ter reception; and the Scots promiſed the aſſiſtance of their arms to re-inſtate her family upon the throne [a]. But as the danger from that quarter ſeemed not very urgent to Edward, he did not purſue the fugitive King and Queen into their retreat; but returned to London, where a parliament was ſummoned for ſettling the government. CHAP. XXII. 1461.

On the meeting of this aſſembly, Edward found the good effects of his vigorous meaſure in aſſuming the crown, as well as of his victory at Touton, by which he had ſecured it: The parliament no longer heſitated between the two families, or propoſed any of thoſe ambiguous deciſions, which could only tend to perpetuate and inflame the animoſities of party. They recognized the title of Edward to the crown, by hereditary deſcent, thro' the family of Mortimer; and declared, that he was King in right, from the death of his father, who had alſo the ſame lawful title; and that he was in poſſeſſion of the throne from the day that he aſſumed the government, tendered to him by the acclamations of the people [b]. They expreſſed their abhorrence of the uſurpation and intruſion of the houſe of Lancaſter, particularly that of the earl of Derby, otherwiſe called Henry IV. which, they ſaid, had been attended with every kind of diſorder, the murder of the ſovereign and the oppreſſion of the ſubjects. They annulled every grant which had paſſed in thoſe reigns; they reinſtated the King in all the poſſeſſions, which had belonged to the crown at the pretended depoſition of Richard II. and tho' they confirmed judicial deeds and the decrees of inferior courts, they reverſed all attainders paſſed in any pretended parliament; particularly the attainder of the earl of Cambridge, the King's grandfather; as well as that of the 4th Nov. A parliament.

[a] Hall, fol. 137. Habington, p. 434.
[b] Cotton, p. 670.

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earls of Saliſbury and Gloceſter and of lord Lumley, who were forfeited for adhering to Richard II [c].

1461. MANY of theſe votes were the reſult of the uſual violence of party: The common ſenſe of mankind, in more peaceable times, repealed them: And the ſtatutes of the houſe of Lancaſter, being the deeds of an eſtabliſhed government, and enacted by princes long poſſeſſed of authority, have always been held as valid and obligatory. The parliament, however, in ſubverting ſuch deep foundations, had ſtill the pretence of replacing the government on its antient and natural baſis: But in their ſubſequent meaſures, they were more guided by revenge, or at leaſt the views of convenience, than by the maxims of equity and juſtice. They paſſed an act of forfeiture and attainder againſt Henry VI. and Queen Margaret, and their infant ſon, prince Edward: The ſame act was extended to the dukes of Somerſet and Exeter; to the earls of Northumberland, Devonſhire, Pembroke, Wilts; to the viſcount Beaumont, the lords Roos, Nevil, Clifford, Wells, Dacre, Gray of Rugemont, Hungerford; to Alexander Hedie, Nicholas Latimer, Edmond Mountfort, John Heron, and many other perſons of diſtinction [d]. The parliament veſted the eſtates of all theſe attainted perſons in the crown; tho' their ſole crime was the adhering to a prince, whom every individual of the parliament had ſo long recognized, and whom that very King himſelf, who was now ſeated on the throne, had acknowledged and obeyed as his lawful ſovereign.

THE neceſſity of ſupporting the government eſtabliſhed, will juſtify more fully ſome other acts of violence; tho' the method of conducting them may ſtill appear exceptionable. John earl of Oxford and his ſon, Aubrey de

[c] Cotton, p. 672. Statutes at large, 1 Edw. IV. cap. 1.

[d] Cotton, p. 670. W. Wyrceſter, p. 490.

Vere,

Vere, were detected in a correſpondence with Margaret, were tried by martial law before the conſtable, were condemned and executed [e]. Sir William Tyrrel, Sir Thomas Tudenham, and John Montgomery were convicted in the ſame arbitrary court; were executed, and their eſtates forfeited. This introduction of martial law into civil government was a high ſtrain of prerogative; which, were it not for the violence of the times, would probably have appeared exceptionable to a nation ſo jealous of their liberties as the Engliſh were now become [f]. It

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[e] W. de Wyrceſter, p. 492. Hall, fol. 189. Grafton, p. 658. Fabian, fol. 215. Fragm. ad finem T. Sproti.

[f] That we may judge how arbitrary a court, that of the conſtable of England was, we may peruſe the patent granted to the earl of Rivers in this reign, as it is to be found in Spellman's Gloſſary in verb. *Conſtabularius*; as alſo, more fully in Rymer, vol. xi. p. 581. Here is a clauſe of it: *Et ulterius de uberiori gratia noſtra eidem comiti de Rivers plenam poteſtatem damus ad cognoſcendum, & procedendum, in omnibus, & ſingulis, cauſis et negotiis, de et ſuper crimine leſæ majeſtatis ſeu ſuper occaſione cæteriſque cauſis, quibuſcunque per præfatum comitem de Rivers, ut conſtabularium Angliæ —quæ in curia conſtabularii Angliæ ab antiquo, viz. tempore dicti domini Gulielmi conqueſtoris ſeu aliquo tempore citra tractari, audiri, examinari, aut decidi conſueverant, aut jure debuerant, aut debent, cauſaſque et negotia prædicta cum omnibus et ſingulis emergentibus, incidentibus & connexis, audiendum, examinandum, et fine debito terminandum, etiam* ſummarie et de plano, ſine ſtrepitu et figura juſtitiæ, ſola facti veritate inſpecta, *ac etiam manu regia, ſi opportunum viſum fuerit eidem comiti de Rivers, vices noſtras, appellatione remota.* The office of conſtable was perpetual in the monarchy; its juriſdiction was not limited to times of war, as appears from this patent, and as we learn from the ſame author: Yet its authority was in direct contradiction to *Magna Charta*; and it is evident that no *regular* liberty could ſubſiſt with it. It involved a full dictatorial power, continually ſubſiſting in the ſtate. The only check on the crown, beſides the want of force to ſupport all its prerogatives, was, that the office of conſtable was commonly either hereditary or during life; and the perſon inveſted with it, was, for that reaſon, not ſo proper an inſtrument of arbitrary power in the King. Accordingly, the office was ſuppreſſed by Henry VIII. the moſt arbitrary of all the Engliſh princes.

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1461. It was impoſſible but ſuch a great and ſudden revolution muſt leave the roots of diſcontent and diſſatisfaction in the ſubjects, which would require great art, or in lieu of it, great violence to extirpate them. The latter was more ſuitable to the genius of the nation in that uncultivated age.

But the new eſtabliſhment ſeemed precarious and uncertain; not only from the domeſtic diſcontents of the people, but from the efforts of foreign powers. Lewis, the eleventh of the name, had ſucceeded to his father, Charles, in 1460; and was led, from the obvious motives of national intereſt, to feed the flames of civil diſcord among ſuch dangerous neighbours, by giving ſupport to the weaker party. But the intriguing and politic genius of this prince was here checked by itſelf: Having attempted to ſubdue the independant ſpirit of his own vaſſals, he had excited ſuch an oppoſition at home, as prevented him from making all the advantage, which the opportunity afforded, of the diſſenſions among the Engliſh. He ſent however a ſmall body to Henry's aſſiſt-
1462. ance under Varenne, Seneſchal of Normandy [g], who landed in Northumberland, and got poſſeſſion of the caſtle of Alnewic; but as the indefatigable Margaret went in perſon to France, where ſhe ſolicited larger ſupplies [h]; and promiſed Lewis to deliver up Calais, if her family was by his means reſtored to the throne of England; he was afterwards perſuaded to ſend along with her a body of 2000 men at arms [i], which enabled her to

The practice, however, of exerciſing martial law, ſtill ſubſiſted; and was not aboliſhed till the Petition of Right under Charles I. This was the epoch of true liberty, confirmed by the Reſtoration, and enlarged and ſecured by the Revolution.

[g] Monſtrelet, vol. iii. p. 95.

[h] W. Wyrceſter, p. 493. Hall, fol. 190. Hollingſhed, p. 665.

[i] W. Wyrceſter, p. 493.

take

take the field, and to make an inroad into England. Tho' reinforced by a numerous train of adventurers from Scotland, and by many partizans of the family of Lancaſter; ſhe received a check at Hedgley-more from lord Montacute or Montague, brother to the earl of Warwic, and warden of the eaſt Marches between Scotland and England [k]. Montague was ſo elated with this ſucceſs, that, while a numerous reinforcement was on their march to join him by orders from Edward, he yet ventured, with his own troops alone, to attack the Lancaſtrians at Hexham, and he obtained a complete victory over them. The duke of Somerſet, the lords Roos, and Hungerford, were taken in the purſuit, and immediately beheaded by martial law at Hexham [l]. Summary juſtice was in like manner executed at Newcaſtle on Sir Humphrey Nevil, and ſeveral other gentlemen [m]. All thoſe who were ſpared in the field, ſuffered on the ſcaffold; and the utter extermination of their adverſaries was now become the plain object of the York party; a conduct, which received but too plauſible an apology from the preceding practice of the Lancaſtrians.

CHAP. XXII.

1464.

25th April.

Battle of Hexham.

15th May.

THE fate of the unfortunate royal family, after this defeat, was very ſingular. Margaret, flying with her ſon into a foreſt, where ſhe endeavoured to conceal herſelf, was beſet, during the darkneſs of the night, by robbers, who either ignorant or regardleſs of her quality, deſpoiled her of her rings and jewels, and treated her with the utmoſt indignity. The partition of this rich booty raiſed a quarrel among them; and while their attention was thus engaged, ſhe took the opportunity of making her eſcape with her ſon into the thickeſt of the foreſt, where ſhe wandered for ſome time, over-ſpent

[k] Rymer, vol. xi. p. 500.

[l] W. Wyrceſter, p. 498. Hall, fol. 190. Grafton, p. 661.

[m] Fabian, fol. 215. Polyd. Virg. p. 512, 513.

with

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1461. It was impoſſible but ſuch a great and ſudden revolution muſt leave the roots of diſcontent and diſſatisfaction in the ſubjects, which would require great art, or in lieu of it, great violence to extirpate them. The latter was more ſuitable to the genius of the nation in that uncultivated age.

But the new eſtabliſhment ſeemed precarious and uncertain, not only from the domeſtic diſcontents of the people, but from the efforts of foreign powers. Lewis, the eleventh of the name, had ſucceeded to his father, Charles, in 1460; and was led, from the obvious motives of national intereſt, to feed the flames of civil diſcord among ſuch dangerous neighbours, by giving ſupport to the weaker party. But the intriguing and politic genius of this prince was here checked by itſelf: Having attempted to ſubdue the independant ſpirit of his own vaſſals, he had excited ſuch an oppoſition at home, as prevented him from making all the advantage, which the opportunity afforded, of the diſſenſions among the Engliſh. He ſent however a ſmall body to Henry's aſſiſt-
1462. ance under Varenne, Seneſchal of Normandy [g], who landed in Northumberland, and got poſſeſſion of the caſtle of Alnewic; but as the indefatigable Margaret went in perſon to France, where ſhe ſolicited larger ſupplies [h]; and promiſed Lewis to deliver up Calais, if her family was by his means reſtored to the throne of England; he was afterwards perſuaded to ſend along with her a body of 2000 men at arms [i], which enabled her to

The practice, however, of exerciſing martial law, ſtill ſubſiſted; and was not aboliſhed till the Petition of Right under Charles I. This was the epoch of true liberty, confirmed by the Reſtoration, and enlarged and ſecured by the Revolution.

[g] Monſtrelet, vol. iii. p. 95.

[h] W. Wyrceſter, p. 493. Hall, fol. 190. Hollingſhed, p. 665.

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[l] W. Wyrceſter, p. 498. Hall, fol. 190. Graſton, p. 661.

[m] Fabian, fol. 215. Polyd. Virg. p. 512, 513.

with

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with hunger and fatigue, and ſunk with terror and affliction. While in this wretched condition, ſhe ſaw a robber approach with his naked ſword; and finding that ſhe had no means of eſcape, ſhe ſuddenly embraced the reſolution of truſting entirely for protection to his faith and generoſity. She advanced towards him; and preſenting to him the young prince, called out to him, *Here, my friend, I commit to your care the ſafety of your King's ſon.* The man, whoſe humanity and generous ſpirit had been obſcured, but not entirely loſt, by his vicious courſe of life, was ſtruck with the ſingularity of the event, and charmed with the confidence repoſed in him; and he vowed, not only to abſtain from all injury againſt the princeſs, but to devote himſelf entirely to her ſafety and protection [n]. By his means ſhe dwelt ſome time concealed in the foreſt, and was at laſt conducted to the ſea-coaſt, whence ſhe made her eſcape into Flanders. She paſſed thence into her father's court, where ſhe lived ſeveral years in privacy and retirement. Her huſband was not ſo fortunate or ſo dextrous in finding the means of his eſcape. Some of his friends took him under their protection, and conveyed him into Lancaſhire; where he remained concealed during a twelvemonth; but he was at laſt detected, delivered up to Edward, and thrown into the Tower [o]. The ſafety of his perſon was owing leſs to the generoſity of his enemies, than to the contempt, which they had entertained of his courage and his underſtanding.

THE impriſonment of Henry, the expulſion of Margaret, the execution and confiſcation of all the moſt conſiderable Lancaſtrians, ſeemed to give full ſecurity to Edward's government; whoſe title by blood, being now

[n] Monſtrelet, vol. iii. p. 96.

[o] Hall, fol. 191. Fragm. ad finem Sproti.

recognized by parliament, and univerſally ſubmitted to by the people, was no longer in danger of being impeached by any antagoniſt. In this proſperous ſituation, the King delivered himſelf up, without controul, to thoſe pleaſures which his youth, his high fortune, and his natural temperament invited him to enjoy; and the cares of royalty were leſs attended to, than the diſſipation of amuſement, or the allurements of paſſion. The cruel and unrelenting ſpirit of Edward, tho' enured to the ferocity of civil wars, was at the ſame time extremely devoted to the ſofter paſſions, which, without mitigating his ſevere temper, maintained a great influence over him, and ſhared his attachment with the purſuits of ambition, and the thirſt of military glory. During the preſent interval of peace, he lived in the moſt familiar and ſociable manner with his ſubjects [p], particularly with the Londoners; and the beauty of his perſon, as well as the gallantry of his addreſs, which, even unaſſiſted by his royal dignity, would have rendered him extremely acceptable to the fair ſex, facilitated all his applications for their favour. This eaſy and pleaſurable life augmented every day his popularity among all ranks of men: He was the peculiar favourite of the young and gay of both ſexes: The diſpoſition of the Engliſh, little addicted to jealouſy, kept them from taking umbrage at theſe liberties: And his indulgence in amuſements, while it gratified his inclination, was thus become, without deſign, a means of ſupporting and ſecuring his government: But as it is difficult to reduce the ruling paſſion within ſtrict rules of prudence, the amorous temper of Edward led him into a ſnare which proved very fatal to his future repoſe, and to the ſtability of his throne.

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JAQUELINE DE LUXEMBOURG, dutcheſs of Bedford,

[p] Polyd. Virg. p. 513. Biondi.

had,

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King's marriage with the lady Elizabeth Gray.

had, after her huſband's death, ſo far ſacrificed her ambition to love, that ſhe eſpouſed, in ſecond marriage, Sir Richard Wideville, a private gentleman, afterwards created lord Rivers, to whom ſhe bore ſeveral children, and among the reſt, Elizabeth, who was remarkable for the grace and beauty of her perſon, as well as for other amiable accompliſhments. This young lady had married Sir John Gray of Groby, by whom ſhe had children; and her huſband being killed in the ſecond battle of St. Albans, fighting on the ſide of Lancaſter, and his eſtate being for that reaſon confiſcated, his widow retired to live with her father, at his ſeat of Grafton in Northamptonſhire. The King came accidentally to the houſe, after a hunting party, in order to pay a viſit to the dutcheſs of Bedford; and as the occaſion ſeemed favourable for obtaining ſome grace from this gallant monarch, the young widow flung herſelf at his feet, and with many tears, entreated him to take pity on her impoveriſhed and diſtreſſed children. The ſight of ſo much beauty in affliction, ſtrongly affected the amorous Edward; love ſtole inſenſibly into his heart under the guiſe of compaſſion; and her ſorrow, ſo becoming a virtuous matron, made his eſteem and regard quickly correſpond to his affection. He raiſed her from the ground with aſſurances of favour; he found his paſſion encreaſe every moment, by the converſation of the amiable object; and he was ſoon reduced in his turn to the poſture and ſtile of a ſupplicant at the feet of Elizabeth. But the lady, either averſe to diſhonourable love from a ſenſe of duty, or perceiving that the impreſſion which ſhe had made was ſo deep as to give her hopes of obtaining the higheſt elevation, obſtinately refuſed to gratify his paſſion; and all the endearments, careſſes, and importunity of the young and amiable Edward, proved fruitleſs againſt her rigid and inflexible virtue. His paſſion, irritated by oppoſition,

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poſition, and encreaſed by his veneration for ſuch honourable ſentiments, carried him at laſt beyond all bounds of reaſon; and he offered to ſhare his throne, as well as his heart, with the woman, whoſe beauty of perſon, and dignity of character, ſeemed ſo well to entitle her to both. The marriage was celebrated privately at Grafton [g]: The ſecret was carefully kept for ſome time: No one ſuſpected, that ſo libertine a prince could ſacrifice ſo much to a romantic paſſion: And there were in particular ſtrong reaſons, which at that time rendered this ſtep in the higheſt degree dangerous and imprudent.

THE King, deſirous to ſecure his throne, as well by the proſpect of iſſue, as by foreign alliances, had, a little before, determined to make application to ſome neighbouring princeſs; and he had caſt his eye on Bona of Savoy, ſiſter to the Queen of France, who, he hoped, would, by his marrying her, enſure him the friendſhip of that power, which was alone both able and inclined to give ſupport and aſſiſtance to his rival. To render the negotiation more ſucceſsful, the earl of Warwic had been diſpatched to Paris, where the princeſs then reſided; he had demanded Bona in marriage for the King; his propoſals had been accepted; the treaty was fully concluded; and nothing remained but the ratification of the terms agreed on, and the bringing over the princeſs into England [h]. But when the ſecret of Edward's marriage broke out, the haughty earl, deeming himſelf affronted, both by being employed in this deceitful negotiation, and by being kept a ſtranger to the King's intentions, who had owed every thing to his friendſhip, immediately returned to England, inflamed with rage

[g] Hall, fol. 193. Fabian, fol. 216.

[h] Hall, fol. 193. Habington, p. 437. Holingſhed, p. 667. Grafton, p. 665. Polyd. Virg. p. 513.

and

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and indignation. The influence of paſſion, over ſo young a man as Edward, might have ſerved as an excuſe for his imprudent conduct, had he deigned to acknowledge his error, or had pleaded his weakneſs as an apology: But his faulty ſhame or pride prevented him from ſo much as mentioning the affair to Warwic; and that nobleman was allowed to depart the court, full of the ſame ill humour and diſcontent, which he brought to it.

Warwic diſguſted.

1466. EVERY incident now tended to widen the breach between the King and this powerful ſubject. The Queen loſt not her influence by marriage; and ſhe was equally ſolicitous to draw every grace and favour to her own friends and kindred, and to exclude thoſe of the earl, whom ſhe regarded as her mortal enemy. Her father was created earl of Rivers: He was made lord treaſurer in the room of lord Mountjoy [h]: He was inveſted in the office of conſtable for life; and his ſon received the ſurvivance of that high dignity [i]. The ſame young nobleman was married to the only daughter of lord Scales, enjoyed the great eſtate of that family, and had the title of Scales conferred upon him. Catharine, the Queen's ſiſter, was married to the young duke of Buckingham, who was a ward of the crown [k]: Mary, another of her ſiſters, eſpouſed William Herbert, created earl of Huntingdon: Anne, a third ſiſter, was given in marriage to the ſon and heir of Gray, lord Ruthyn, created earl of Kent [l]. The daughter and heir of the duke of Exeter, who was alſo the King's niece, was contracted to Sir Thomas Gray, one of the Queen's ſons by her former huſband; and as the lord Montague was treating of a marriage between his ſon and this lady, the preference

[h] W. Wyrceſter, p. 506.
[i] Rymer, vol. xi. p. 581.
[k] W. Wyrceſter, p. 505.
[l] Ibid. p. 506.

given

given to young Gray was deemed an injury and affront to the whole family of Nevil. CHAP. XXII.

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THE earl of Warwic could not endure the leaſt diminution of that credit, which he had long enjoyed, and which, he thought, he had merited by ſuch important ſervices. Tho' he had received ſo many grants from the crown, that the revenue ariſing from them amounted, beſides his patrimonial eſtate, to 80,000 crowns a year, according to the computation of Philip de Comines [m]; his ambitious ſpirit was ſtill diſſatisfied, ſo long as he ſaw others ſurpaſs him in authority and influence with the King [n]. Edward alſo, jealous of that power which had ſupported him, and which he himſelf had contributed ſtill higher to exalt, was well pleaſed to raiſe up rivals in credit to the earl of Warwic; and he juſtified by this political view, his extreme partiality to the Queen's kindred. But the other nobility of England, envying the ſudden growth of the Widevilles [o], were more inclined to take part with Warwic's diſcontent, to whoſe grandeur they were already accuſtomed, and who had reconciled them to his ſuperiority by his gracious and popular manners. And as Edward obtained from parliament a general reſumption of all grants, which he had made ſince his acceſſion, and which had extremely impoveriſhed the crown [p]; this act, tho' it paſſed with ſome exceptions, particularly one in favour of the earl of Warwic, gave a general alarm to the nobility, and diſguſted many, even zealous partizans of the family of York.

BUT the moſt conſiderable aſſociate, whom Warwic acquired to his party, was George, duke of Clarence,

[m] Liv. 3d chap. 4.

[n] Polyd. Virg. p. 514.

[o] Hiſt. Croyl. cont. p. 539.

[p] W. Wyrceſter, p. 508.

the

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the King's ſecond brother. This prince deemed himſelf no leſs injured than the other grandees, by the uncontrouled influence of the queen and her relations; and as his fortunes were ſtill left on a precarious footing, while theirs were fully eſtabliſhed, this neglect, joined to his unquiet and reſtleſs ſpirit, inclined him to give countenance to all the malecontents [q]. The favourable opportunity of gaining him was eſpied by the earl of Warwic, who offered him in marriage his eldeſt daughter, and co-heir of his immenſe fortunes; a ſettlement which, as it was ſuperior to any that the King himſelf could confer upon him, immediately attached him to the earl's party [r]. Thus an extenſive and dangerous combination was inſenſibly formed againſt Edward and his miniſtry: Tho' the object of the malecontents was not at preſent to overturn the throne, it was difficult to foreſee the extremities, to which they might be carried; and as oppoſition to an adminiſtration was uſually in thoſe ages proſecuted by force of arms, civil convulſions and diſorders were likely to be ſoon the reſult of theſe intrigues and confederacies.

Alliance with the duke of Burgundy.

WHILE this cloud was gathering at home, Edward carried his views abroad, and endeavoured to ſecure himſelf againſt his factious nobility, by entering into foreign alliances. The dark and dangerous ambition of Louis XI. the more it was known, the greater alarm it excited among all his neighbours and vaſſals; and as it was ſupported by great abilities, and unreſtrained by any principles of faith or humanity, they found no ſecurity to themſelves but by a jealous combination againſt him. Philip, duke of Burgundy, was now dead: His rich and

[q] Grafton, p. 673.

[r] W. Wyrceſter, p. 511. Hall, fol. 200. Habington, p. 439. Holingſhed, p. 671. Polyd. Virg. p. 515.

extenſive

extenſive dominions were devolved to Charles, his only ſon, whoſe martial diſpoſition acquired him the ſirname of *Hardy*, and whoſe ambition, more outrageous than that of Lewis, but ſeconded by leſs power and policy, was regarded with a more favourable eye by the other powers of Europe. The oppoſition of intereſts, and ſtill more, a natural antipathy of character, produced a declared animoſity between theſe two bad princes; and Edward was thus ſecure of the ſincere attachment of either of them, for whom he ſhould chooſe to declare himſelf. The duke of Burgundy, being deſcended by his mother, a daughter of Portugal, from John of Gaunt, was naturally inclined to favour the houſe of Lancaſter [r]: But this conſideration was eaſily overbalanced by politics; and Charles, perceiving the intereſt of that houſe to be extremely decayed in England, ſent over his natural brother, commonly called the baſtard of Burgundy, to carry in his name propoſals of marriage to Margaret the King's ſiſter. The alliance of Burgundy was more popular with the Engliſh, than that of France; the commercial intereſts of the two nations invited the princes to a cloſe union; their common jealouſy of Lewis was a natural cement between them; and Edward, pleaſed with ſtrengthening himſelf by ſo potent a confederate, ſoon concluded the alliance, and beſtowed his ſiſter upon Charles [s]. A league, which Edward at the ſame time concluded with the duke of Brittany, ſeemed both to encreaſe his ſecurity, and to open to him the proſpect of rivalling his predeceſſors in thoſe foreign conqueſts, which, however ſhort-lived and unprofitable, had rendered their reign ſo popular and illuſtrious [t].

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1466.

1468.

[r] Comines, liv. 3. chap. 4. 6.
[s] Hall, fol. 169. 197.
[t] W. Wyrceſter, p. 5. Parliament. Hiſt. vol. ii p. 332.

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But whatever ambitious ſchemes the King might have built on theſe alliances, they were ſoon fruſtrated by inteſtine commotions, which engroſſed all his attention. Theſe diſorders probably aroſe not immediately from the intrigues of the earl of Warwic, but from accident, aſſiſted by the turbulent ſpirit of the age, by the general humour of diſcontent which that popular nobleman had inſtilled into the nation, and perhaps by ſome remains of attachment to the houſe of Lancaſter. The hoſpital of St. Leonards near York, had received, from an antient grant of King Athelſtane, a right of levying a thrave of corn from every plough-land in the county; and as theſe charitable eſtabliſhments are very liable to abuſe, the country people complained, that the revenue of the hoſpital was no longer expended for the relief of the poor, but was ſecreted by the managers, and employed for their private purpoſes. After long repining at the contribution, they refuſed payment: Eccleſiaſtical and civil cenſures were iſſued againſt them: Their goods were diſtrained, and their perſons thrown into jail: Till, as their ill-humour daily encreaſed, they roſe in arms; fell upon the officers of the hoſpital, whom they put to the ſword; and proceeded in a body, fifteen thouſand ſtrong, to the gates of York [u]. The lord Montague, who commanded in thoſe parts, oppoſed himſelf to their progreſs; and having been ſo fortunate in a ſkirmiſh as to ſeize Robert Hulderne their leader, he ordered him immediately to be led to execution; according to the barbarous and illegal practice of thoſe times [x]. The rebels, however, ſtill continued in arms; and being ſoon headed by men of greater diſtinction, Sir Henry Nevil, ſon of lord Latimer, and Sir John Co-

Inſurrection in Yorkſhire.

[u] Hall, fol. 200. Holingſhed, p. 672. Polyd. Virg. p. 516.

[x] Graſton, p. 674.

niers, they advanced ſouthwards, and began to appear dangerous to the government. Herbert, earl of Pembroke, who had received that title on the forfeiture of Jaſper Tudor, was ordered by Edward to march againſt them at the head of a body of Welſhmen; and he was joined by five thouſand archers under the command of Stafford, earl of Devonſhire, who had ſucceeded in that title to the family of Courtney, which had alſo been forfeited. But a trivial difference about quarters having begot an animoſity between theſe two noblemen, the earl of Devonſhire retired with his archers, and left Pembroke alone to encounter the rebels [y]. The two armies approached near Banbury; and Pembroke, having prevailed in a ſkirmiſh, and having taken Sir Henry Nevil priſoner, ordered him immediately to be put to death, without any form of proceſs. This execution enraged, without terrifying, the rebels: They attacked the Welſh army, routed them, put them to the ſword without mercy; and having ſeized Pembroke, they took immediate revenge upon him for the death of their leader [z]. The King, imputing this misfortune to the earl of Devonſhire, who had deſerted Pembroke, ordered him to be executed in a like ſummary manner. But theſe ſpeedy executions, or rather open murders, did not ſtop there: The northern rebels, ſending a party to Grafton, ſeized the earl of Rivers and his ſon John; men who had become obnoxious by their near relation to the King and his partiality towards them: And theſe noblemen were immediately executed by orders from Sir John Coniers [a]. Finished Nov. 3 - 11

Battle of Banbury. 26th July.

[y] Stowe, p. 221. Holingſhed, p. 672. Fragm. ad finem Sprotti.
[z] Hall, fol. 201, 202. Grafton, p. 676.
[a] Fabian, fol. 217.

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1469.

THERE is no part of Engliſh hiſtory ſince the Conqueſt, ſo obſcure, ſo uncertain, ſo little authentic or conſiſtent, as that of the wars, between the two Roſes: Hiſtorians differ about many material circumſtances; ſome events of the utmoſt conſequence, in which they almoſt all agree, are incredible and contradicted by records [b]; and it is remarkable, that this profound darkneſs falls upon us juſt on the eve of the reſtoration of letters, and when the art of Printing was already known in Europe. All we can diſtinguiſh with certainty thro' the deep cloud, which covers that period, is a ſcene of horror and blood-

[b] We ſhall give an inſtance: Almoſt all the hiſtorians, even Comines, and the continuator of the annals of Croyland, aſſert that Edward was about this time taken priſoner by Clarence and Warwic, and was committed to the cuſtody of the archbiſhop of York, brother to the earl; but being allowed to take the diverſion of hunting by this prelate, he made his eſcape, and afterwards chaced the rebels out of the kingdom. But that all the ſtory is falſe appears from Rymer, where we find, that the King, throughout all this period, continually exerciſed his authority, and never was interrupted in his government. On the 7th of March 1470, he gives a commiſſion of array to Clarence, whom he then imagined a good ſubject; and on the 23d of the ſame month, we find him iſſuing an order for apprehending him. Beſides, in the King's manifeſto againſt the duke and earl, (Clauſ. 10. Edward IV. m. 7. 8.) where he enumerates all their treaſons, he mentions no ſuch fact: He does not ſo much as accuſe them of exciting young Welles's rebellion: He only ſays, that they exhorted him to continue in his rebellion. We may judge how ſmaller facts will be miſrepreſented by hiſtorians, who can in the moſt material tranſactions miſtake ſo groſsly. There may even ſome ſcruple ariſe with regard to the propoſals of marriage made to Bona of Savoy; tho' almoſt all the hiſtorians concur in it, and the fact be very likely in itſelf: For there are no traces in Rymer of any ſuch embaſſy of Warwic's to France. The chief certainty in this and the preceding reign ariſes either from public records, or from the notice taken of certain paſſages by the French hiſtorians. On the contrary, for ſome centuries after the Conqueſt, the French hiſtory is not compleat without the aſſiſtance of Engliſh authors.

ſhed,

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ſhed, ſavage manners, arbitrary executions, and treacherous diſhonourable conduct in all parties. There is no poſſibility, for inſtance, of accounting for the views and intentions of the earl of Warwic at this time. It is agreed, that he reſided, with his ſon-in-law, the duke of Clarence, in his government of Calais, during the commencement of this rebellion; and that his brother Montague, acted with vigour againſt the northern rebels. We may thence preſume, that the inſurrection had not proceeded from the ſecret councils and inſtigation of Warwic; tho' the murder, committed by the rebels, on the earl of Rivers, his capital enemy, forms, on the other hand, a violent preſumption againſt him. He and Clarence came over to England, offered their ſervice to Edward, were received without any ſuſpicion, were entruſted by him in the higheſt commands [c], and ſtill perſevered in their fidelity. Soon after, we find the rebels quieted and diſperſed by a general pardon granted by Edward from the advice of the earl of Warwic: But why ſo courageous a prince, if ſecure of Warwic's fidelity, ſhould have granted a general pardon to men, who had been guilty of ſuch violent and perſonal outrages againſt him, is not intelligible; nor why that nobleman, if unfaithful, ſhould have endeavoured to appeaſe a rebellion, of which he was able to make ſuch advantages. But it appears, that, after this inſurrection, there was an interval of peace, during which the King loaded the family of Nevil with honours and favours of the higheſt nature: He made the lord Montague a marqueſs, by the ſame name: He created his ſon, George, duke of Bedford [d]: He declared publicly his intention of marrying that young nobleman to his eldeſt daughter, Elizabeth, who, as he

[c] Rymer, vol. xi. p. 647. 649, 650.

[d] Cotton, p. 702.

CHAP. XXII.

had yet no ſons, was the preſumptive heir of the crown: Yet we find, that, ſoon after, being invited to a feaſt by the archbiſhop of York, a younger brother of Warwic and Montague, he entertained a ſudden ſuſpicion, that they intended to ſeize his perſon or to murder him: And he abruptly departed from the entertainment [e].

1469.

1470. SOON after, there broke out another rebellion, which is as unaccountable as all the preceding events; chiefly becauſe no ſufficient reaſon is aſſigned for it, and becauſe, ſo far as it appears, the family of Nevil had no hand in exciting and fomenting it. It aroſe in Lincolnſhire, and was headed by Sir Robert Welles, ſon to the lord of that name. The army of the rebels amounted to 30,000 men; but the lord Welles himſelf, far from giving countenance to them, fled into a ſanctuary, in order to ſecure his perſon againſt the King's anger or ſuſpicions. He was drawn from this retreat by a promiſe of ſafety; and was ſoon after, notwithſtanding this aſſurance, beheaded, along with Sir Thomas Dymoc, by orders from Edward [f]. The King fought a battle with the rebels, defeated them, took Sir Robert Welles and Sir Thomas Launde priſoners, and ordered them immediately to be beheaded.

13th March.

EDWARD, during theſe tranſactions, had ſo little jealouſy of the earl of Warwic or duke of Clarence, that he granted them commiſſions of array for levying forces againſt the rebels [g]: But theſe noblemen, ſo ſoon as they left the court, raiſed troops in their own name, iſſued declarations againſt the government, and complained of

[e] Fragm. Ed. IV. ad fin. Sprotti.

[f] Hall, fol. 204. Fabian, fol. 218. Habington, p. 442. Holingſhed, p. 674.

[g] Rymer, vol. xi. p. 652.

grievances,

grievances, oppreſſions, and bad miniſters. The unexpected defeat of Welles diſconcerted all their meaſures; and they retired northwards into Lancaſhire, where they expected to be joined by lord Stanley, who had married the earl of Warwic's ſiſter. But as that nobleman refuſed all concurrence with them, and as lord Montague alſo remained quiet in Yorkſhire; they were obliged to diſſolve their army, and to fly into Devonſhire, where they embarked and made ſail towards Calais [h]. CHAP. XXII. 1470. Warwic and Clarence baniſhed.

THE deputy governor, whom Warwic had left at Calais, was one Vaucler, a Gaſcon, who, ſeeing the earl return in this miſerable condition, refuſed him admiſſion into the place; and would not ſo much as permit the dutcheſs of Clarence to land, tho' a few days before, ſhe had been delivered on ſhip-board of a ſon, and was at that time extremely diſordered by ſickneſs. With difficulty, he would allow a few flaggons of wine to be carried to the ſhip for the uſe of the ladies. But as he was a man of ſagacity, and well acquainted with the revolutions, to which England was ſubject, he ſecretly apologized to Warwic for this appearance of infidelity, and repreſented it as proceeding entirely from zeal for his ſervice. He ſaid, that the place was ill ſupplied with proviſions; that he could not depend on the attachment of the garriſon; that the inhabitants, who lived by the Engliſh commerce, would certainly declare for the eſtabliſhed government; that the place was at preſent unable to reſiſt the power of England on the one hand, and that of the duke of Burgundy on the other; and that, by ſeeming to declare for Edward, he would acquire the confidence of that prince, and ſtill keep it in

[h] The King offered by proclamation a reward of 1000 pounds, or 100 pounds ayear in land, to any that would ſeize them. Whence we may learn that land was at that time ſold for about ten years purchaſe. See Rymer, vol. xi. p. 654.

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his power, when it ſhould become ſafe and prudent, to reſtore the fortreſs to its ancient maſter [i]. It is uncertain, whether Warwic was ſatisfied with this apology, or ſuſpected a double infidelity in Vaucler; but he feigned to be entirely convinced by him; and having ſeized ſome Flemiſh veſſels which he found lying off Calais, he immediately made ſail towards France.

THE King of France, uneaſy at the cloſe conjunction between Edward and the duke of Burgundy, received with the greateſt demonſtrations of regard and friendſhip the unfortunate Warwic [k], with whom he had formerly maintained a ſecret correſpondence, and whom he hoped ſtill to make his inſtrument in overturning the government of England, and re-eſtabliſhing the houſe of Lancaſter. No animoſity was ever greater than that which had long prevailed between that houſe and the earl of Warwic. His father had been executed by orders from Margaret: He himſelf had twice reduced Henry to captivity, had baniſhed the queen, had put to death all their moſt zealous partizans either in the field or on the ſcaffold, and had occaſioned innumerable ills to that unhappy family. For this reaſon, believing that ſuch inveterate rancour would never admit of any cordial reconciliation, he had not mentioned Henry's name, when he took arms againſt Edward; and he rather endeavoured to prevail by means of his own adherents, than revive a party, which he ſincerely hated. But his preſent diſtreſſes and the entreaties of Lewis, made him hearken to terms of accommodation; and Margaret being ſent for from Angers, where ſhe then reſided, an agreement was from common intereſt ſoon formed between them. It was ſtipulated, that Warwic ſhould

[i] Comines, liv. 3. chap. 4. Hall, fol. 205.

[k] Polyd. Virg. p. 519.

adopt

adopt the cauſe of Henry, and endeavour to reſtore him to liberty and to re-eſtabliſh him on the throne; that the adminiſtration of the government, during the minority of young Edward, Henry's ſon, ſhould reſide conjointly in the earl of Warwic and the duke of Clarence; that prince Edward ſhould marry the lady Anne, ſecond daughter of that nobleman; and that the crown, in caſe of the failure of male iſſue in that prince, ſhould deſcend to the duke of Clarence, to the entire excluſion of King Edward and his poſterity. Never was confederacy on all ſides, leſs natural or more evidently the work of neceſſity: But Warwic hoped, that all former paſſions of the Lancaſtrians might be loſt in preſent political views; and that at worſt, the independant power of his family, and the affections of the people, would be able to give him ſecurity, and enable him to exact the full performance of all the conditions agreed on. The marriage of prince Edward with the lady Anne was immediately celebrated in France. CHAP. XXII. 1470.

EDWARD reaſonably foreſaw, that it would be eaſy to diſſolve an alliance, compoſed of ſuch diſcordant parts. For this purpoſe, he ſent over a lady of great ſagacity and addreſs, who belonged to the train of the dutcheſs of Clarence, and who, under colour of attending her miſtreſs, was empowered to negotiate with the duke, and renew the connexions of that prince with his own family [a]. She repreſented to Clarence, that he had unwarily, to his own ruin, become the inſtrument of Warwic's vengeance, and had thrown himſelf entirely in the power of his moſt inveterate enemies; that the mortal injuries, which the one royal family had ſuffered from the other, were now paſt all forgiveneſs, and no idea of an imaginary union in intereſts could ever ſuffice to

[a] Comines, liv. 3. chap. 5. Hall, fol. 207. Holingſhed, p. 675.

obli-

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obliterate them; that even if the leaders were willing to forget paſt offences, the animoſity of their adherents would prevent a ſincere coalition of parties, and would, in ſpite of all temporary and verbal agreements, preſerve an eternal oppoſition of meaſures between them; and that a prince, who deſerted his own kindred, and joined the murderers of his father, left himſelf ſingle, without friends, without protection, and would not, when miſfortunes inevitably fell upon him, be ſo much as entitled to any pity or regard from the reſt of mankind. Clarence was only one and twenty years of age, and ſeems to have poſſeſſed but a ſlender capacity; yet he could eaſily ſee the force of theſe reaſons; and on the promiſe of forgiveneſs from his brother, he ſecretly engaged, on a favourable opportunity, to deſert the earl of Warwic, and abandon the Lancaſtrian party.

DURING this negotiation, Warwic was ſecretly carrying on a correſpondence of the ſame nature with his brother, the marqueſs of Montague, who was entirely truſted by Edward; and like motives produced a like reſolution in that nobleman. The marqueſs alſo, that he might render the projected blow the more deadly and incurable, reſolved, on his ſide, to watch a favourable opportunity for committing *his* perfidy, and ſtill to maintain the appearance of being a zealous adherent to the houſe of York.

AFTER theſe mutual ſnares were thus carefully laid, the deciſion of the quarrel advanced apace. Lewis prepared a fleet to eſcort the earl of Warwic, and offered him a ſupply of men and money [b]. The duke of Burgundy, on the other hand, enraged at that nobleman for his ſeizure of the Flemiſh ſhips before Calais, and anxi-

[b] Comines, liv. 3. chap. 4. Hall, fol. 207.

ous

ous to support the reigning family in England, with whom his own interests were now connected, fitted out a larger fleet, with which he guarded the Channel; and he incessantly warned his brother-in-law of the imminent perils, to which he was exposed. But Edward, tho' always brave and often active, had very little foresight or penetration. He was not sensible of his danger: He made no suitable preparations against the earl of Warwic [c]: He even said, that the duke might spare himself the trouble of guarding the seas, and that he wished for nothing more than to see Warwic set foot on English ground [d]. A vain confidence in his own prowess, joined to the immoderate love of pleasure, had made him incapable of all sound reason and reflection.

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Sept. Warwic and Clarence return.

The event soon happened, of which Edward seemed so desirous. A storm dispersed the Flemish navy, and left the seas open to Warwic [e]. That nobleman seized the opportunity, and setting sail, quickly landed at Dartmouth, with the duke of Clarence, the earls of Oxford and Pembroke, and a small body of troops; while the King was in the north, engaged in suppressing an insurrection, which had been raised by the lord Fitz-Hugh, brother in law to Warwic. The scene, which ensues, seems more like the fiction of a poem or romance than an event in true history. The prodigious popularity of Warwic [f], the zeal of the Lancastrian party, the spirit of discontent with which many were infected, and the general instability of the English nation, occasioned by the late frequent revolutions, drew such multitudes to his standard, that in a very few days his army amounted to sixty thousand men, and was continually encreasing.

[c] Grafton, p. 687.

[d] Comines, liv. 3. chap. 5. Hall, fol. 208.

[e] Comines, liv. 3. chap. 5. [f] Hall, fol. 205.

Edward

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1470. Edward haſtened ſouthwards to encounter him; and the two armies approached each other near Nottingham, where a deciſive action was every moment expected. The rapidity of Warwic's progreſs had incapacitated the duke of Clarence from executing *his* plan of treachery; and the marqueſs of Montague had here the opportunity of ſtriking the firſt blow. He communicated the deſign to his adherents, who promiſed him their concurrence: They took to arms in the night-time, and haſtened with loud acclamations to Edward's quarters: The King was alarmed at the noiſe, and ſtarting from his bed, heard the cry of war, uſually employed by the Lancaſtrian party. Lord Haſtings, his chamberlain, informed him of the danger, and urged him to make his eſcape by ſpeedy flight from an army, where he had ſo many concealed enemies, and where few ſeemed to be zealouſly attached to his ſervice. He had juſt time to get on horſeback, and to hurry with a ſmall retinue to Lynne, in Norfolk, where he luckily found ſome ſhips ready, on board which he preſently embarked [g]. And after this manner, the earl of Warwic, in no longer ſpace than eleven days after his firſt landing, was left entire maſter of the kingdom.

Edward IV. expelled.

But Edward's danger did not end with his embarkation. The Eaſterlings or Hanſe-Towns were then at war both with France and England; and ſome ſhips of theſe people, hovering on the Engliſh coaſt, eſpied the King's veſſels, and gave chace to them; nor was it without extreme difficulty, that he made his eſcape into the port of Alcmaer in Holland. He had fled from England with ſuch precipitation, that he had carried nothing of value along with him; and the only reward,

[g] Comines, liv. 3. chap. 5. Hall, fol. 208.

which

which he could beſtow on the captain of the veſſel, that brought him over, was a robe, lined with ſables; promiſing him an ample recompence, if fortune ſhould ever become more propitious to him [h]. CHAP. XXII. 1470.

It is not likely, that Edward could be very fond of preſenting himſelf in this lamentable condition before the duke of Burgundy; and that having ſo ſuddenly, after his mighty vaunts, loſt all footing in his own kingdom, he could be inſenſible to the ridicule, which muſt attend him in the eyes of that prince. The duke, on his part, was no leſs embarraſſed how he ſhould receive the dethroned monarch. As he had ever borne a greater affection to the houſe of Lancaſter than to that of York, nothing but political views had engaged him to contract an alliance with the latter family; and he foreſaw, that probably the revolution in England would now turn this alliance againſt him, and render the reigning family in that kingdom his implacable and jealous enemy. For this reaſon, when the firſt rumour of that event reached him, attended with the circumſtance of Edward's death, he ſeemed rather pleaſed with the cataſtrophe; and it was no diſagreeable diſappointment to find, that he muſt either undergo the burthen of ſupporting an exiled prince, or the diſhonour of abandoning ſo near a relation [i]. He began already to ſay, that his connexions were with the kingdom of England, not with the King; and that it was indifferent to him, whether the name of Edward, or that of Henry was employed in the articles of treaty [k]. Theſe ſentiments were continually ſtrengthened by the ſubſequent events. Vaucler, the deputy governor of Calais, tho' he had been confirmed in his command by Edward, and even received an annual penſion from the

[h] Comines, liv. 3. chap. 5. [i] Ibid. Habington, p. 445.
[k] Comines, liv. 3. chap. 6. Hall, fol. 211.

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duke of Burgundy on account of his fidelity to the crown [l], no ſooner ſaw his old maſter, Warwic, reinſtated in authority, than he declared for him, and with great demonſtrations of zeal and attachment, put the whole garriſon in his livery [m]. And the intelligence, which the duke received every day from England, ſeemed to promiſe an entire and full ſettlement in the family of Lancaſter.

Henry VI. reſtored.

IMMEDIATELY after Edward's flight had left the kingdom at Warwic's diſpoſal, that nobleman haſtened to London; and taking Henry from his confinement in the Tower, into which he had been the chief cauſe of throwing him, he proclaimed him King with great ſolemnity. A parliament was ſummoned in the name of that prince to meet at Weſtminſter; and as this aſſembly could pretend to no liberty amidſt ſuch enraged factions, governed by ſuch an impetuous ſpirit as Warwic, their votes were entirely dictated by the ruling party [n]. The treaty with Margaret was here fully executed: Henry was recognized for lawful King; but his incapacity for government being avowed, the regency was entruſted to Warwic and Clarence till the majority of prince Edward; and in default of that prince's iſſue, Clarence was declared ſucceſſor to the crown. The uſual buſineſs alſo of reverſals went on without oppoſition: Every ſtatute, made during the reign of Edward, was repealed; that prince was declared to be an uſurper; he and his adherents were attainted; and in particular, Richard, duke of Gloceſter, his younger brother: All the attainders of the Lancaſtrians, the dukes of Somer-

[l] Grafton, p. 683.

[m] Comines, liv. 3. chap. 6. Hall, fol. 211.

[n] Grafton, p. 691. Fabian, fol. 219. Polyd. Virg. p. 521.

ſet

ſet and Exeter, the earls of Richmond, Pembroke, Oxford and Ormond, were reverſed; and every one was reſtored, who had loſt either honours or fortune, by his former adherence to the cauſe of Henry. CHAP. XXII. 1470.

THE ruling party were more ſparing in their executions, than was uſual after any revolution during thoſe violent times. The only victim of diſtinction was John Tibetot, earl of Worceſter, conſtable of England. This accompliſhed perſon, born in an age and nation where the nobility valued themſelves on ignorance as their privilege, and left learning to monks and ſchoolmaſters, for whom indeed the ſpurious erudition that prevailed, was beſt fitted, had been ſtruck with the firſt rays of true ſcience, which began to penetrate from the ſouth, and had been zealous, by his exhortations and example, to propagate the love of letters among his unpoliſhed countrymen. It is pretended, that knowledge had not produced on this nobleman himſelf, the effect which ſo naturally attends it, of humanizing the temper, and ſoftening the heart [o]; and that he had enraged the Lancaſtrians againſt him, by the ſeverities which he exerciſed upon them, during the prevalence of his own party. He endeavoured to conceal himſelf after the flight of Edward; but was caught on the top of a tree in the foreſt of Weybridge, was conducted to London, tried before the earl of Oxford, condemned and executed. All the other conſiderable Yorkiſts either fled beyond ſea, or took ſhelter in ſanctuaries; where the eccleſiaſtical privileges afforded them protection. In London alone, it is computed, that no leſs than 2000 perſons ſaved themſelves in this manner [p]; and among the reſt, Edward's

[o] Hall, fol. 210. Stowe, p. 422.

[p] Comines, liv. 3. chap. 7.

Queen,

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Queen, who was there delivered of a ſon, called by his father's name [q].

1470. Queen Margaret, the other rival Queen, had not yet appeared in England, but on receiving intelligence of Warwic's ſucceſs, was preparing with prince Edward for her journey. All the baniſhed Lancaſtrians flocked to her; and among the reſt, the duke of Somerſet, ſon to the duke beheaded after the battle of Hexham. This nobleman, who had long been regarded as the head of the party, had fled into the Low Countries on the diſcomfiture of his friends; and as he concealed his name and quality, he had languiſhed in the moſt extreme want and indigence. Philip de Comines tells us [r], that he himſelf there ſaw him, as well as the duke of Exeter, in a condition no better than that of the meaneſt beggar; till being diſcovered by Philip duke of Burgundy, they had ſmall penſions allotted them, and were living in ſilence and obſcurity, when the ſucceſs of their party called them from their retreat. But both Somerſet and Margaret were detained by contrary winds, from reaching England [s], till a new revolution in that kingdom, no leſs ſudden and ſurpriſing than the former, threw them into greater miſery than that from which they had juſt emerged.

Tho' the duke of Burgundy, by neglecting Edward, and paying court to the eſtabliſhed government, had endeavoured to conciliate the friendſhip of the Lancaſtrians, he found that he had not ſucceeded to his wiſh; and the antient connexions between the King of France, and the earl of Warwic, ſtill held him in great doubt and anxiety [t]. This nobleman, too haſtily regarding

[q] Hall, fol. 210. Stowe, p. 423. Hollingſhed, p. 677. Graſton, p. 690.

[r] Liv. 3. chap. 4.

[s] Grafton, p. 692. Polyd. Virg. p. 522. [t] Hall, fol. 205.

Charles

Charles as his determined enemy, had ſent over to Calais a body of 4000 men, who committed inroads on the Low-Countries [u]; and the duke of Burgundy ſaw himſelf in danger of being oppreſſed by the united arms of France and of England. He reſolved therefore to grant ſome aſſiſtance to his brother-in-law; but in ſuch a covert manner, as ſhould give the leaſt offence poſſible to the government of England. He equipped four large veſſels, in the name of ſome private merchants, at Terveer in Zealand; and cauſing fourteen ſhips to be ſecretly hired of the Eaſterlings, he delivered this ſmall ſquadron to Edward, who, receiving alſo a ſum of money from the duke, immediately ſet ſail for England. No ſooner was Charles informed of his departure, than he iſſued a proclamation inhibiting all his ſubjects to give him countenance or aſſiſtance [x]; an artifice which could not blind the earl of Warwic, but which might ſerve as a decent pretence, if he was ſo diſpoſed, for maintaining friendſhip with the houſe of Burgundy. CHAP. XXII. 1470. 1471.

EDWARD, impatient to take revenge of his enemies, and to recover his loſt authority, made an attempt to land with his forces, which exceeded not 2000 men, on the coaſt of Norfolk; but being there repulſed [y], he ſailed northwards, and diſembarked at Ravenſpur in Yorkſhire. Finding, that the new magiſtrates, who had been placed in authority by the earl of Warwic, kept the people every where from joining him, he pretended, and even made oath, that he came not to challenge the crown, but only the inheritance of the houſe of York, which of right belonged to him, and that he did not intend to raiſe a civil war in the kingdom [z]. His 25 March. Edward IV. returns.

[u] Comines, liv. 3. chap. 6.
[x] Ibid.
[y] Hollingſhed, p. 679.
[z] Hall, fol. 214. Habington, p. 447. Hollingſhed, p. 679. Craſton, p. 698. Fabian, fol. 219.

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1471.

partizans every moment flocked to his ſtandard: He was admitted into the city of York [a]: And he was ſoon in a ſituation, which gave him hopes of ſucceſs in all his claims and pretenſions. The marquis of Montague commanded in the northern counties; but from ſome myſterious reaſons, which, as well as many other important tranſactions in that age, no hiſtorian has cleared up, he totally neglected the beginnings of an inſurrection, which he ought to have eſteemed ſo formidable [b]. Warwic aſſembled an army at Leiceſter, with an intention of meeting and of giving battle to the enemy; but Edward, by taking another road, paſſed him unmoleſted, and preſented himſelf before the gates of London. Had he here been refuſed admittance, he was totally ruined: But there were many cauſes, which inclined the citizens to favour him. His numerous friends, iſſuing forth from their ſanctuaries, were active in his cauſe; many rich merchants, who had formerly lent him money, ſaw no other chance for their payment but his reſtoration; the city-dames, who had been liberal of their favours to him, and who ſtill retained an affection for this young and gallant prince, ſwayed their huſbands and friends in his behalf [c]; and above all, the archbiſhop of York, Warwic's brother, to whom the care of the city was committed, had ſecretly, from unknown reaſons, entered into a correſpondence with him, and he facilitated Edward's admiſſion into London. The moſt likely cauſe, which can be aſſigned for thoſe multiplied infidelities, even in the family itſelf of Nevil, is the ſpirit of faction, which, when it becomes inveterate, it is very difficult for any man entirely to ſhake

11th April.

[a] Polyd. Virg. p. 524. Leland's collect. vol. ii. p. 504.

[b] Hall, fol. 215. Habington, p. 447. Hollingſhed, p. 680. Polyd. Virg. p. 524.

[c] Comines, liv. 3. chap. 7.

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off. These persons, who had long distinguished themselves in the York party, were unable to act with zeal and cordiality for the support of the Lancastrians; and they were inclined, by every prospect of favour or accommodation, offered them by Edward, to return to their antient connexions. However this may be, Edward's entrance into London, made him master not only of that rich and powerful city, but also of the person of Henry, who, destined to be the perpetual sport of fortune, thus fell again into the hands of his enemies [d]. CHAP. XXII. 1471.

It appears not, that Warwic, during his short administration, which had continued only six months, had been guilty of any unpopular acts, or had any wise deserved to forfeit that general favour, with which he had so lately overwhelmed Edward. But this prince, who was formerly the defendant, was now the aggressor; and having overcome the difficulties, which always attend the beginnings of an insurrection, possessed many advantages above his enemy: His partizans were actuated by that zeal and courage, which the notion of an attack inspires; his opponents were intimidated for a like reason; every one, who had been disappointed in the hopes, which he had entertained from Warwic's elevation, either became a cool friend, or an open enemy to that nobleman; and each malecontent, from whatever cause, proved an accession to Edward's army. The King, therefore, found himself in a condition to face the earl of Warwic, who, being reinforced by his son-in-law, the duke of Clarence, and his brother the marquis of Montague, took post at Barnet, in the neighbourhood of London. The arrival of Queen Margaret was every day expected, who would have drawn together all the true Lancastrians, and have brought a mighty accession to Warwic's

[d] Grafton, p. 702.

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forces: But this very conſideration proved a motive to the earl rather to hurry on a deciſive action, than to ſhare the victory with rivals and antient enemies, who, he foreſaw, would, in caſe of ſucceſs, claim the chief merit in the enterprize [e]. But while his jealouſy was all directed towards that ſide, he overlooked the dangerous infidelity of friends, who lay the neareſt to his boſom. His brother, Montague, who had lately temporized, ſeems now to have remained ſincerely attached to the intereſts of his family: But his ſon-in-law, tho' bound to him by every tye of honour and gratitude, tho' he ſhared the power of the regency, tho' he had been inveſted by Warwic in all the honours and patrimony of the houſe of York, reſolved to fulfil the ſecret engagements, which he had formerly taken with his brother, and to ſupport the intereſts of his own family: He deſerted to the King in the night-time, and carried over a body of 12,000 men along with him [f]. Warwic was now too far advanced to retreat; and as he rejected with diſdain all terms of peace offered him by Edward and Clarence, he was obliged to hazard a general engagement. The battle was fought with great obſtinacy on both ſides: The two armies, in imitation of their leaders, exerted uncommon acts of valour: And the victory remained long undecided between them. But an accident threw at laſt the balance to the ſide of the Yorkiſts. Edward's cogniſance was a ſun; that of Warwic a ſtar with rays; and the miſtineſs of the morning rendering it difficult to diſtinguiſh them, John earl of Oxford, who fought on the ſide of the Lancaſtrians, was, by miſtake, attacked by his friends, and chaced off the field of battle [g].

14th April. Battle of Barnet, and death of Warwic.

[e] Comines, liv. 3. chap. 7.

[f] Grafton, p. 700. Comines, liv. 3. chap. 7. Leland's Collect. vol. ii. p. 505.

[g] Habington, p. 449.

Warwic, contrary to his more uſual practice, engaged that day on foot, reſolving to ſhow his army, that he meant to ſhare every fortune with them, and he was ſlain in the thickeſt of the engagement [h]: His brother underwent the ſame fate: And as Edward had iſſued orders not to give any quarter, a great and undiſtinguiſhed ſlaughter was made in the purſuit [i]. There fell about 1500 on the ſide of the conquerors. CHAP. XXII. 1471.

THE ſame day that this deciſive battle was fought [k], Queen Margaret and her ſon, now about eighteen years of age, and a very promiſing youth, arrived at Weymouth, ſupported by a ſmall body of French forces. When this princeſs received intelligence of her huſband's captivity, and of the defeat and death of the earl of Warwic, her courage, which had ſupported her under ſo many diſaſtrous events, here quite left her; and ſhe immediately foreſaw all the diſmal conſequences of this calamity. She took ſanctuary at firſt in the abbey of Beaulieu [l]; but being encouraged by the appearance of Tudor, earl of Pembroke, and Courtney, earl of Devonſhire, of the lords Wenloc and St. John, with other men of rank, who exhorted her ſtill to hope for ſucceſs, ſhe reſumed her former ſpirit, and determined to defend to the utmoſt the ruins of her fallen fortunes. She advanced thro' the counties of Devon, Somerſet, and Gloceſter, encreaſing her army on each day's march; but was at laſt overtaken by the rapid and expeditious Edward, at Teukeſbury, on the banks of the Severne. The Lancaſtrians were here totally defeated: The earl of Devonſhire and lord Wenloc were killed in the field: Battle of Teukeſbury. 4th May.

[h] Comines, liv. 3. chap. 7.

[i] Hall, fol. 218.

[k] Leland's Collect. vol. ii. p. 505.

[l] Hall, fol. 219. Habington, p. 451. Grafton, p. 706. Polyd. Virg. p. 528.

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1471. The duke of Somerſet, and about twenty other perſons of diſtinction, having taken ſhelter in a church, were ſurrounded, dragged out, and immediately beheaded: About 3000 of their ſide fell in battle: And the army was entirely diſperſed.

QUEEN Margaret and her ſon were taken priſoners, and brought to the King, who aſked the prince, after an inſulting manner, how he dared to invade his dominions? The young prince, more mindful of his high birth than of his preſent fortune, replied, that he came thither to claim his juſt inheritance. The ungenerous Edward, inſenſible to pity, ſtruck him on the face with his gauntlet; and the dukes of Clarence and Gloceſter, lord Haſtings and Sir Thomas Gray, taking the blow as a ſignal for farther violence, hurried the prince into the next apartment, and there diſpatched him with their daggers [m]. Margaret was thrown into the Tower: King Henry expired in that confinement a few days after the battle of Teukeſbury; but whether he died of a natural or violent death is uncertain. It is pretended, and was generally believed, that the duke of Gloceſter killed him with his own hands [n]: But the univerſal odium under which that prince's memory deſervedly labours, inclined perhaps the nation to aggravate his crimes without any ſufficient authority. It is certain, however, that Henry's death was very ſudden; and tho' he laboured before under an ill ſtate of health, this circumſtance, joined to the general manners of the age, gave a very natural ground of ſuſpicion; which was rather increaſed than diminiſhed, by the expoſing of his body to public view.

Murder of prince Edward. 21ſt May.

Death of Henry VI.

[m] Hall, fol. 221. Habington, p. 453. Hollingſhed, p. 688. Polyd. Virg. p. 530.

[n] Comines, Hall, fol. 223. Grafton, p. 703.

That precaution ſerved only to recal many ſimilar inſtances in the Engliſh hiſtory, and to ſuggeſt the compariſon. CHAP. XXII. 1471.

ALL the hopes of the Lancaſtrians ſeemed now to be utterly extinguiſhed. Every legitimate prince of that family was dead: Almoſt all the great leaders of the party had periſhed in battle or on the ſcaffold: Jaſper, earl of Pembroke, who was levying forces in Wales, diſperſed his army, when he received intelligence of the battle of Teukeſbury; and he fled into Brittany with his nephew, the young earl of Richmond [o]. The baſtard of Falconbridge, who had levied ſome forces, and advanced to London during Edward's abſence, was repulſed; his men deſerted him; he was taken priſoner and immediately executed [p]: And peace being now fully reſtored to the nation, a parliament was ſummoned, which ratified, as uſual, all the acts of the victor, and recognized his legal authority. 6th Octob.

BUT this prince, who had been ſo firm and active, and intrepid during the courſe of adverſity, was ſtill unable to reſiſt the allurements of a proſperous fortune; and he wholly devoted himſelf, as before, to pleaſure and amuſement, after he became entirely maſter of his kingdom, and had no longer any enemy who could give him anxiety or alarm. He recovered, however, by this gay and inoffenſive courſe of life, and by his eaſy, familiar manners, that popularity, which it it is natural to imagine, he had loſt by the repeated cruelties exerciſed upon his enemies; and the example alſo of his jovial feſtivity, ſerved to abate the former acrimony of faction among his ſubjects, and to reſtore the ſocial diſpoſition, which 1472.

[o] Habington, p. 454. Polyd. Virg. p. 531.

[p] Hollingſhed, p. 689, 690. 693. Hiſt. Croyl. cont. p. 554.

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had been ſo long interrupted between the oppoſite parties. All men ſeemed to be fully ſatisfied with the preſent government; and the memory of paſt calamities ſerved only to impreſs the people more ſtrongly with a ſenſe of their allegiance, and with the reſolution of never incurring any more the hazard of renewing ſuch direful ſcenes.

But while the King was thus indulging himſelf in pleaſure, he was rouzed from the lethargy by a proſpect of foreign conqueſts, which, it is probable, his deſire of popularity, more than the ſpirit of ambition, had made him covet. Tho' he deemed himſelf very little beholden to the duke of Burgundy, for the reception which that prince had given him during his exile [q], the political intereſts of their ſtates maintained ſtill a cloſe connexion between them; and they agreed to unite their arms in making a powerful invaſion on France. A league was formed, in which Edward ſtipulated to paſs the ſeas with an army, exceeding 10,000 men, and to invade the French territories: Charles promiſed to join him with all his forces: The King was to challenge the crown of France, and to obtain at leaſt the provinces of Normandy and Guienne: The duke was to acquire Champaigne and ſome other territories, and to free all his dominions from the burthen of homage to the crown of France: And neither party was to make peace without the conſent of the other [r]. They were the more encouraged to hope for ſucceſs from this league, as the count de St. Pol, conſtable of France, who was maſter of St. Quintin, and ſome towns on the Somme, had ſecretly promiſed them his aſſiſtance; and there were alſo hopes of engaging the duke of Brittany to enter into the confederacy.

[q] Comines, liv. 3, chap. 7. 8c7, 808, &c.

[r] Rymer, vol. xi. p. 806,

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THE proſpect of a French war was always a ſure means of making the parliament open their purſes, as far as the habits of that age would permit. They voted the King a tenth of rents, or two ſhillings in the pound; which muſt have been very inaccurately levied, ſince it produced only 31,460 pounds; and they added to this ſupply a whole fifteenth, and three quarters of another [t]: But as the King deemed theſe ſums ſtill unequal to the undertaking, he attempted to levy money by the way of *benevolence*; a ſort of exaction, which, except during the reign of Richard II. had ſcarce ever been practiſed in former times, and which, tho' the conſent of the parties was pretended to be gained, could not be eſteemed entirely voluntary [z]. The clauſes, annexed to the parliamentary grant, ſhow ſufficiently the ſpirit of the nation in this reſpect. The money levied by the fifteenth was not to be put into the King's hands, but to be kept in religious houſes; and if the expedition into France did not take place, it was immediately to be refunded to the people. After theſe grants, the parliament was diſſolved, which had ſat near two years and a half, and had undergone ſeveral prorogations; a practice not very uſual at that time in England. 1474.

THE King paſſed over to Calais with an army of 1500 men at arms, and 15000 archers; attended with all the chief nobility of England, who, prognoſticating future ſucceſſes from the paſt, were eager to appear in this great theatre of honour [a]. But all their ſanguine 1475. Invaſion of France.

[t] Cotton, p. 696, 700. Hiſt. Croyl. cont. p. 558.

[z] Hall, fol. 226. Habington, p. 461. Grafton, p. 719. Fabian, fol. 221.

[a] Comines, liv. 4. chap. 5. This author ſays, (chap. 11.) that the King artfully brought over ſome of the richeſt of his ſubjects, who, he knew, would be ſoon tired of the war, and would promote all propoſals of peace, which he foreſaw, would be ſoon neceſſary.

hopes

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hopes were damped, when they found, on entering the French territories, that neither the conſtable opened his gates to them, nor did the duke of Burgundy bring them the ſmalleſt aſſiſtance. That prince, tranſported by his ardent temper, had carried all his armies to a great diſtance, and had employed them in wars on the frontiers of Germany, and againſt the duke of Lorrain; and tho' he came in perſon to Edward, and endeavoured to apologize for this breach of treaty, there was no proſpect that they would be able this campaign to make a conjunction with the Engliſh. This circumſtance gave great diſguſt to the King, and inclined him to hearken to thoſe advances, which Lewis continually made him for an accommodation.

THAT monarch, more ſwayed by political views than by the point of honour, deemed no ſubmiſſions too mean, which could free him from enemies, who had proved ſo formidable to his predeceſſors, and who, united to ſo many other enemies, might ſtill ſhake the well-eſtabliſhed government of France. It appears from Comines, that diſcipline was, at this time, very imperfect among the Engliſh; and that their civil wars, tho' long continued, yet, being always decided by haſty battles, had ſtill left them ignorant of the improvements, which the military art was beginning to receive upon the continent [b]. But as Lewis was ſenſible, that the warlike genius of the people would ſoon render them excellent ſoldiers, he was far from deſpiſing them for their preſent want of experience; and he employed all his art to detach them from their alliance with Burgundy. When Edward ſent a herald to claim the crown of France, and to carry him a defiance in caſe of refuſal; ſo far from anſwering to this bravade in

[b] Comines, liv. 4. chap. 5.

like

like haughty terms, he replied with great temper, and even made the herald a conſiderable preſent [c]: He took afterwards an opportunity of ſending a herald to the Engliſh camp; and giving him directions to apply to the lords Stanley and Howard, who, he heard, were friends to peace, he deſired the good offices of theſe noblemen in promoting an accommodation with their maſter [d]. As Edward was now fallen into like diſpoſitions, a truce was ſoon concluded on terms more advantageous than honourable to Lewis. He ſtipulated to pay Edward immediately 75,000 crowns, on condition that he ſhould withdraw his army from France, and promiſed to pay him 50,000 crowns a year during their joint lives; It was added, that the Dauphin, when of age, ſhould marry Edward's eldeſt daughter [e]. In order to ratify this treaty, the two monarchs agreed to have a perſonal interview; and for this purpoſe, ſuitable preparations were made at Pecquigni near Amiens: A cloſe rail was drawn acroſs a bridge in that place, with no larger intervals than would allow the arm to paſs; a precaution which was uſed to prevent a like accident with that which happened to John Duke of Burgundy in his conference with the Dauphin at Montereau. Edward and Lewis came to the oppoſite ſides; conferred privately together; and having confirmed their friendſhip, and interchanged many mutual civilities, they ſoon after parted [f].

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29th Auguſt.

Peace of Pecquigni.

Lewis was anxious not only to gain the King's friendſhip; but alſo that of the nation, and of all the conſiderable perſons in the Engliſh court. He beſtowed penſions, to the amount of 16,000 crowns a year, on ſeveral of the King's favourites; on lord Haſtings two

[c] Comines, liv. 4. chap. 5. Hall, fol. 227.
[d] Comines, liv. 4. chap. 7.
[e] Rymer, vol. xii. p. 87.
[f] Comines, liv. 4 chap. 9.

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thousand crowns; on lord Howard and others in proportion; and these great ministers were not ashamed thus to receive wages from a foreign prince [g]. As the two armies, after the conclusion of the truce, remained some time in the neighbourhood of each other, the English were not only admitted freely into Amiens, where Lewis resided, but had also all their charges defrayed, and had wine and victuals furnished them in every inn, without any payments being demanded. They flocked thither in such multitudes, that once above nine thousand of them were in the town, and they might have made themselves masters of the King's person; but Lewis, concluding from their careless and dissolute manner of living, that they had no bad intentions, was careful not to betray the least signs of fear or jealousy. And when Edward, informed of this disorder, desired him to shut the gates against them; he replied, that he would never agree to exclude the English from the place where he resided; but Edward, if he pleased, might recall them, and place his own officers at the gates of Amiens to prevent their returning [h].

Lewis's desire of confirming a mutual amity with England, engaged him even to make imprudent advances, which cost him afterwards some pains to evade. In the conference at Pecquigni, he had said to Edward, that he wished to have a visit from him at Paris; that he would there endeavour to amuse him with the ladies; and that, in case any offences were then committed, he would assign him the cardinal of Bourbon for confessor, who, from fellow-feeling, would not be over and above severe in the penances, which he would injoin. This hint made deeper impressions than Lewis intended.

[g] Hall, fol. 235. [h] Comines, liv. 4. chap. 9. Hall, fol. 233.

Lord

Lord Howard, who accompanied him back to Amiens, told him, in confidence, that, if he was ſo diſpoſed, it would not be impoſſible to perſuade Edward to take a journey with him to Paris, where they might make merry together. Lewis pretended at firſt not to hear this offer; but on Howard's repeating it, he expreſſed his concern, that his wars with the duke of Burgundy would not permit him to attend his royal gueſt, and do him the honours he intended. "Edward," ſaid he, privately to Comines, "is a very handſome and a very amorous prince: "Some lady at Paris may like him as well as he ſhall "do her; and may invite him to return in another man-"ner. It is better that the ſea ſhould be between us[i]." CHAP. XXII. 1475.

THIS treaty did very little honour to either of theſe monarchs: It diſcovered the imprudence of Edward, who had taken his meaſures ſo ill with his allies, as to be obliged, after ſuch expenſive preparations, to return without making any acquiſitions, equivalent to them: It ſhowed the want of dignity in Lewis, who, rather than run the hazard of a battle, agreed to ſubject his kingdom to a tribute, and thus acknowledge the ſuperiority of a neighbouring prince, poſſeſſed of much leſs power and territory than himſelf. But as Lewis made intereſt the ſole teſt of honour, he thought, that all the advantages of the treaty were on his ſide, and that he had over-reached Edward by ſending him out of France on ſuch eaſy terms. For this reaſon, he was very ſolicitous to conceal his triumph; and he ſtrictly enjoined his courtiers never to ſhow the Engliſh the leaſt ſign of mockery or ridicule againſt them. But he did not himſelf very carefully obſerve ſo prudent a rule: He could not forbear, one day, in the joy of his heart, throwing out ſome raillery on the eaſy ſimplicity of Edward and his coun-

[i] Comines, liv. 4. chap. 10. Habington, p. 469.

cil:

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cil: When he perceived, that he was overheard by a Gaſcon, who had ſettled in England. He was immediately ſenſible of the blunder; ſent a meſſage to the gentleman; and offered him ſuch advantages in his own country, as engaged him to remain in France. *It is but juſt*, ſaid he, *that I pay the penalty of my talkativeneſs*[k].

THE moſt honourable part of Lewis's treaty with Edward was the ſtipulation for the liberty of Queen Margaret, who, tho' after the death of her huſband and ſon, ſhe could no longer be formidable to the government, was ſtill detained in cuſtody by Edward. Lewis paid fifty thouſand crowns for her ranſom; and that princeſs, who had been ſo active in the ſtage of the world, and who had experienced ſuch a variety of fortune, paſſed the reſt of her days in tranquillity and privacy, till the year 1482, when ſhe died: An admirable princeſs, but more illuſtrious by her undaunted ſpirit in adverſity, than by her moderation in proſperity. She ſeems neither to have enjoyed the virtues, nor been ſubject to the weakneſſes of her ſex; and was as much tainted with the ferocity, as endowed with the courage, of that barbarous age in which ſhe lived.

THO' Edward had ſo little reaſon to be ſatisfied with the conduct of the duke of Burgundy, he reſerved to that prince a power of acceding to the treaty of Amiens: But Charles, when the offer was made him, haughtily replied, that he was able to ſupport himſelf without the aſſiſtance of England, and that he would make no peace with Lewis, till three months after Edward's return into his own country. This prince poſſeſſed all the ambition and courage of a conqueror; but being defective in policy and prudence, qualities no leſs eſſential, he was

[k] Comines, liv. 3. chap. 10.

unfortunate

unfortunate in all his enterprizes; and periſhed at laſt in battle againſt the Swiſs[1]; a people, whom he deſpiſed, and who, tho' brave and free, had hitherto been in a manner overlooked in the general ſyſtem of Europe. This event, which happened in the year 1477, produced a great alteration in the views of all the princes, and was attended with conſequences which were felt for many generations. Charles left only one daughter, Mary, by his firſt wife; and this princeſs being heir of his opulent and extenſive dominions, was courted by all the potentates of Chriſtendom, who contended with each other for the poſſeſſion of ſo rich a prize. Lewis, the head of her family, might, by a proper application, have obtained this match for the Dauphin, and have thereby united to the crown of France all the provinces of the Low Countries, together with Burgundy, Artois, and Picardy; which would at once have rendered his kingdom an overmatch for all his neighbours. But a man wholly intereſted is as rare as one entirely endowed with the oppoſite virtue; and Lewis, though impregnable to all the ſentiments of generoſity and friendſhip, was, on this occaſion, carried from the road of true policy by the paſſions of animoſity and revenge. He had imbibed ſo deep a hatred of the houſe of Burgundy, that he choſe rather to ſubdue the princeſs by force of arms, than unite her to his family by marriage: He conquered the dutchy of Burgundy and that part of Picardy, which had been ceded to Philip the Good by the treaty of Arras: But he forced the ſtates of the Netherlands to beſtow their ſovereign in marriage on Maximilian of Auſtria, ſon to the emperor, Frederic, from whom they looked for protection in their preſent di-

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1477.

[1] Comines, liv. 5. chap. 8.

ſtreſſes:

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ſtreſſes: And by theſe means, France loſt the opportunity, which ſhe never could recover, of making that important acquiſition of power and territory.

DURING this intereſting criſis, Edward was no leſs defective in policy, and was no leſs actuated by private paſſions, unworthy of a ſovereign and a ſtateſman. Jealouſy of his brother, Clarence, had cauſed him to neglect the advances which were made of marrying that prince, now a widower, to the heireſs of Burgundy [m]; and he ſent her propoſals of eſpouſing Anthony earl of Rivers, brother to his queen, who ſtill retained an entire aſcendant over him. But the match was rejected with diſdain [n]; and Edward reſenting this treatment of his brother-in-law, permitted Lewis to proceed without interruption in his conqueſts over that defenceleſs ally. Any pretence ſufficed him for giving himſelf up entirely to indolence and pleaſure, which were now become his ruling paſſions. The only object, which divided his attention, was the improving the revenues of the crown, which had been extremely dilapidated by the neceſſities or negligence of his predeceſſors; and ſome of his expedients for that purpoſe, tho' unknown to us, were deemed, during the time, oppreſſive to the people [o]. The detail of private wrongs naturally eſcapes the notice of hiſtory; but an act of tyranny, of which Edward was guilty in his own family, has been taken notice of by all hiſtorians, and has met with very general and deſerved cenſure.

Trial and execution of the duke of Clarence.

THE duke of Clarence, by all his ſervices in deſerting Warwic, had never been able to recover the King's friendſhip, which he had forfeited by his former confede-

[m] Polyd. Virg. Hall, fol. 240. Holingſhed, p. 703. Habington, p. 474. Grafton, p. 742.

[n] Hall, fol. 240. [o] Hall, fol. 241. Hiſt. Croyl. cont. p. 559.

racy

racy with that nobleman. He was ſtill regarded at court as a man of a dangerous and a fickle character; and the imprudent openneſs and violence of his temper, tho' it rendered him much leſs dangerous, tended extremely to multiply his enemies, and to enrage them againſt him. Among theſe, he had had the misfortune to give diſpleaſure to the queen herſelf, as well as to his brother, the duke of Gloceſter, a prince of the deepeſt policy, of the moſt unrelenting ambition, and the leaſt ſcrupulous in the means which he employed for the attainment of his pernicious purpoſes. A combination between theſe potent adverſaries being ſecretly formed againſt Clarence, it was determined to begin with attacking his friends; in hopes, that, if he patiently endured this injury, his puſillanimity would diſhonour him in the eyes of the public; if he made reſiſtance and expreſſed reſentment, his paſſion would betray him into meaſures, which might give them advantages againſt him. The King, hunting one day in the park of Thomas Burdet of Arrow, in Warwickſhire, had killed a white buck, which was a great favourite of the owner; and Burdet, vexed at the loſs, broke into a paſſion, and wiſhed the horns of the deer in the belly of the perſon who had adviſed the King to commit that inſult upon him. This natural expreſſion of reſentment, which would have been overlooked or forgotten, had it come from any other perſon, was rendered criminal and capital in that gentleman, by the friendſhip in which he had the misfortune to live with the duke of Clarence: He was tried for his life; the judges and jury were found ſervile enough to condemn him; and he was publickly beheaded at Tyburn for this pretended offence [P]. About the ſame time, one

CHAP. XXII. 1477.

[P] Habington, p. 475. Holingſhed, p. 703. Sir Thomas More in Kennet, p. 498.

CHAP. XXII.

1477. John Stacey, an eccleſiaſtic, much connected with the duke, as well as with Burdet, was expoſed to a like iniquitous and barbarous perſecution. This perſon, being more learned in mathematics and aſtronomy than was uſual in that age, lay under the reproach of necromancy with the ignorant vulgar; and the tyrannical court laid hold of this popular rumour to effect his deſtruction. He was tried in a court of juſtice for that imaginary crime; many of the greateſt peers countenanced the proſecution by their preſence; he was condemned, put to the torture, and executed [q].

THE duke of Clarence was alarmed, when he found theſe acts of tyranny exerciſed on all around him: He reflected on the fate of the good duke of Gloceſter in the laſt reign, who, after ſeeing the moſt infamous pretences employed for the deſtruction of his neareſt connections, at laſt fell himſelf a victim to the vengeance of his enemies. But Clarence, inſtead of ſecuring his own life againſt the preſent danger, by ſilence and reſerve, was open and loud in juſtifying the innocence of his friends, and in exclaiming againſt the iniquity of their perſecutors. The King, highly offended with his liberty, or uſing that pretence againſt him, committed him to the Tower [r], ſummoned a parliament, and tried him for his life before the houſe of peers, the ſupreme tribunal of the nation.

1478. 16th Jan.

THE duke was accuſed of arraigning public juſtice, by maintaining the innocence of men, who had been condemned in courts of judicature, and of inveighing againſt the iniquity of the King, who had given orders for their proſecution [s]. Many raſh expreſſions were im-

[q] Hiſt. Croyl. cont. p. 561, Stowe, p. 430.

[r] Ibid. p. 562.

puted to him, and ſome too reflecting on his brother's legitimacy; but he was not accuſed of any overt act of treaſon; and even the truth of theſe ſpeeches may be doubted, ſince the liberty of judgment was taken from the court, by the King's appearing perſonally as his brother's accuſer [t], and pleading the cauſe againſt him. But a ſentence of condemnation, even when this extraordinary circumſtance had not place, was a neceſſary conſequence, in thoſe times, of any proſecution by the court or the prevailing party; and the duke of Clarence was accordingly pronounced guilty by the peers. The houſe of commons were no leſs ſlaviſh and unjuſt: They both petitioned for the execution of the duke, and afterwards paſſed a bill of attainder againſt him [u]. The meaſures of the parliament, during that age, furniſh us with examples of a ſtrange contraſt of freedom and ſervility: They ſcruple to grant, and ſometimes refuſe to the King the ſmalleſt ſupplies, the moſt neceſſary for the ſupport of government, even the moſt neceſſary for the maintenance of wars; for which the nation, as well as the parliament itſelf, expreſſed a great fondneſs: But they never ſcruple to concur in the moſt flagrant act of injuſtice or tyranny, which falls on any individual, however diſtinguiſhed by birth or merit. Theſe maxims, ſo ungenerous, ſo oppoſite to all the principles of good government, ſo contrary to the practice of preſent parliaments, are very remarkable in all the tranſactions of the Engliſh hiſtory for more than a century after the period, in which we are now engaged.

CHAP. XXII. 1478.

THE only favour, which the King granted his brother after his condemnation, was to leave him the choice 18th Feb.

[t] Hiſt. Croyl. cont. p. 562.

[u] Stowe, p. 430. Hiſt. Croyl. cont. p. 562.

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[u] Stowe, p. 430. Hiſt. Croyl. cont. p. 562.

CHAP. XXII. 1478.

of his death; and he was privately drowned in a butt of Malmeſey in the Tower: A whimſical choice, which implies that he had an extraordinary paſſion for that liquor. The duke left two children, by the eldeſt daughter of the earl of Warwic, a ſon created an earl by his grandfather's title; and a daughter, afterwards counteſs of Saliſbury. Both this prince and princeſs were alſo unfortunate in their end, and died violent deaths; a fate which, for many years, attended almoſt all the deſcendants of the royal blood in England. There prevails a report, that a chief ſource of the violent proſecution of the duke of Clarence, whoſe name was George, was a current prophecy, that the King's ſons ſhould be murdered by one, the firſt letter of whoſe name was G [x]. It is not impoſſible, that in thoſe ignorant times, ſuch a ſilly reaſon might have influence: But it is more probable, that the whole ſtory is the invention of a ſubſequent age, and founded on the murder of theſe children by the duke of Gloceſter. Comines remarks, that at that time, the Engliſh were never without ſome ſuperſtitious prophecy or other, by which they accounted for every event.

ALL the glories of Edward's reign terminated with the civil wars; where his laurels too were extremely ſullied with blood, violence and cruelty. His ſpirit ſeems afterwards to be ſunk in indolence and pleaſure, or his meaſures were fruſtrated by imprudence and the want of foreſight. There was no object of which he was fonder than to have all his daughters ſettled by ſplendid marriages, tho' moſt of theſe princeſſes were yet in their infancy, and tho' the completion of his views, it was obvious, muſt depend on numberleſs accidents, which were im-

[x] Hall, fol. 239. Holingſhed, p. 703. Grafton, p. 741. Polyd. Virg. p. 537. Sir Thomas More in Kennet, p. 497.

poſſible

possible to be foreseen or prevented. His eldest daughter, Elizabeth, was contracted to the Dauphin; his second, Cicely, to the eldest son of James III. King of Scotland; his third, Anne, to Philip, the eldest son of Maximilian and the dutchess of Burgundy; his fourth, Catharine, to John, son and heir to Ferdinand, King of Arragon, and Isabella, Queen of Castile[y]. None of these projected marriages took place; and the King himself saw in his life-time the rupture of the first, that with the Dauphin, for which he had always discovered a peculiar fondness. Lewis, who paid no regard to treaties or engagements, found his advantage in contracting the Dauphin to the princess Margaret, the daughter of Maximilian; and the King, notwithstanding his indolence, prepared himself to revenge this indignity. The French monarch, eminent for prudence, as well as falsehood, endeavoured to guard against the blow; and by a proper distribution of presents in the court of Scotland, he excited James to make war upon England. This weak prince, who lived on bad terms with his own nobility, and whose force was very unequal to the enterprize, levied an army; but when they were preparing to enter England, the barons, conspiring against his favourites, put them to death without trial; and the army presently dispersed. The duke of Gloucester, attended by the duke of Albany, James's brother, who had been banished his country, entered Scotland at the head of an army, took Berwic, and obliged the Scots to accept of a peace, by which they resigned that fortress to Edward. This success emboldened the King to think more seriously of a French war; but while he was making preparations for that enterprize, he was seized with a distemper, of which he expired in the forty-second year

CHAP. XXII.

1478.

1482.

[y] Rymer, vol. xi. p. 110.

CHAP. XXII.

1482. 9th April. Death and character of Edward IV.

of his age, and the twenty-third of his reign: A prince more ſplendid and ſhowy, than either prudent or virtuous; brave, tho' cruel; addicted to pleaſure, tho' capable of activity in great emergencies; and leſs fitted to prevent ills by wiſe precautions, than to remedy them, after they took place, by his vigour and enterprize. Beſides five daughters, this King left two ſons; Edward, prince of Wales, his ſucceſſor, then in his thirteenth year, and Richard, duke of York, in his ſeventh.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

EDWARD V. and RICHARD III.

Edward V.——*State of the court*——*The earl of Rivers arreſted*——*Duke of Gloceſter protector*——*Execution of Lord Haſtings*——*The protector aims at the crown*——*Aſſumes the crown*——*Murder of Edward* V. *and of the duke of York*——*Richard* III.——*Duke of Buckingham diſcontented*——*The earl of Richmond*——*Buckingham executed*——*Invaſion by the earl of Richmond*——*Battle of Boſworth*——*Death and character of Richard* III.

EDWARD V.

CHAP. XXIII.

1483.

State of the court.

DURING the latter years of Edward IV. the nation, having, in a great meaſure, forgot the bloody feuds between the two Roſes, and acquieſcing peaceably in the eſtabliſhed government, was only agitated by ſome court-intrigues, which being reſtrained by the authority of the King, ſeemed nowiſe to endanger the public tranquillity. Theſe intrigues aroſe from the perpetual rivalſhip between two parties; the one conſiſting of the queen and her relations, particularly the earl of Rivers, her brother, and the marquis of Dorſet, her ſon; the other compoſed of the antient nobility, who envied the ſudden growth and unlimited credit of that aſpiring family [z]. At the head of this latter party was the duke of Buckingham, a man of very noble birth,

[z] Sir Thomas More, p. 481.

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of ample poſſeſſions, of great alliances, of ſhining parts; who, tho' he had married the Queen's ſiſter, was too haughty to act in ſubſerviency to her inclinations, and aimed rather at maintaining an independant influence and authority. Lord Haſtings, the chamberlain, was another leader of the ſame party; and as this nobleman had, by his bravery and enterprize, as well as by his approved fidelity, acquired the confidence and favour of his maſter, he had been able, tho' with ſome difficulty, to ſupport himſelf againſt the credit of the Queen. The lords Howard and Stanley maintained a connexion with theſe two noblemen, and brought a conſiderable acceſſion of influence and credit to their party. All the other barons, who had no particular dependance on the Queen, adhered to the ſame intereſt; and the people in general, from their natural envy againſt the prevailing power, bore great favour to the cauſe of theſe noblemen.

But Edward knew, that, tho' he himſelf had been able to overawe thoſe rival factions, many diſorders might reſult from their conteſts during the minority of his ſon; and he therefore took care, in his laſt illneſs, to ſummon together ſeveral of the leaders on both ſides, and, by compoſing their antient quarrels, to provide, as far as poſſible, for the future tranquillity of the government. After expreſſing his intentions, that his brother, the duke of Gloceſter, then abſent in the north, ſhould be entruſted with the regency, he recommended to them peace and unanimity during the tender years of his ſon; repreſented to them the dangers which muſt attend the continuance of their animoſities; and engaged them to embrace each other with all the ſymptoms of the moſt cordial reconciliation. But this temporary or feigned agreement laſted no longer than the King's life: He had no ſooner expired, than the jealouſies of the parties broke

out

out afresh: And each of them applied, by separate messages, to the duke of Gloucester, and endeavoured to acquire his favour and friendship. CHAP. XXIII. 1483.

THIS prince, during his brother's lifetime, had endeavoured to live on good terms with both parties; and his high birth, his extensive abilities, and his great services, had enabled him to support himself without falling into a dependance on either. But the new situation of affairs, when the supreme power was devolved upon him, immediately changed all his measures; and he secretly determined to preserve no longer that neutrality which he had hitherto maintained. His exorbitant ambition, unrestrained by any principle either of justice or humanity, made him carry his views to the possession of the crown itself; and as this object could not be attained without the ruin of the Queen and her family, he fell, without hesitation, into concert with the opposite party. But being sensible, that the most profound dissimulation was requisite to the effecting his criminal purposes, he redoubled his professions of zeal and attachment to that princess; and he gained such credit with her, as to influence her conduct in a point, which, as it was of the utmost importance, was violently disputed between the opposite factions.

THE King, at the time of his father's death, resided in the castle of Ludlow, on the borders of Wales; whither he had been sent, that the influence of his presence might overawe the Welsh, and restore the tranquillity of that country, which had been disturbed by some late commotions. His person was committed to the care of his uncle, the earl of Rivers, the most accomplished nobleman in England, who, having united an uncommon taste for literature [a] to great abilities in business, and

[a] This nobleman first introduced the noble art of Printing into England. Caxton was recommended by him to the patronage of Edward IV. See Catalogue of royal and noble authors.

valour

CHAP. XXIII. 1483.

valour in the field, was intitled, by his talents, ſtill more than by nearneſs of blood, to direct the education of the young monarch. The Queen, anxious to preſerve that aſcendant over her ſon, which ſhe had ſo long maintained over her huſband, wrote to the earl of Rivers, that he ſhould levy a body of forces, in order to eſcort the King to London, to protect him during his coronation, and to keep him from falling into the hands of their enemies. The oppoſite faction, ſenſible that Edward was now of an age when great advantages could be made of his name and countenance, and was approaching to the age when he would be legally intitled to exert in perſon his authority, foreſaw, that the tendency of this meaſure was to perpetuate their ſubjection under their rivals; and they vehemently oppoſed a reſolution, which they repreſented as the ſignal for renewing a civil war in the kingdom. Lord Haſtings threatened inſtantly to depart to his government of Calais [b]: The other nobles ſeemed reſolute to oppoſe force by force: And as the duke of Gloceſter, on pretence of pacifying the quarrel, had declared againſt all appearance of an armed power, which might be dangerous, and was nowiſe neceſſary, the Queen, truſting to the ſincerity of his friendſhip, and overawed by ſo violent an oppoſition, revoked her orders to her brother, and deſired him to bring up no greater retinue than would be neceſſary to ſupport the ſtate and dignity of the young ſovereign [c].

THE duke of Gloceſter, meanwhile, ſet out from York, attended by a numerous train of the northern gentry. When he reached Northampton, he was joined by the duke of Buckingham, who was alſo attended by a ſplendid retinue; and as he heard, that the King was every hour expected on that road, he reſolved to await

[b] Hiſt. Croyl. cont. p. 564, 565. [c] Sir T. More, p. 483.

his

his arrival, under colour of conducting him thence in person to London. The earl of Rivers, apprehensive that the place would be too narrow to contain so many attendants, sent his pupil forward by another road to Stony-Stratford; and came himself to Northampton, in order to apologize for this measure, and to pay his respects to the duke of Gloucester. He was received with the greatest appearance of cordiality: He passed the evening in an amicable and friendly manner with Gloucester and Buckingham: He proceeded on the road with them next day to join the King: But as he was entering Stony-Stratford, he was arrested by orders of the duke of Gloucester [d]: Sir Richard Gray, one of the Queen's sons, was at the same time put under a guard, together with Sir Thomas Vaughan, who possessed a considerable office in the King's household; and all the prisoners were instantly conducted to Pomfret. Gloucester approached the young prince with the greatest demonstrations of respect; and endeavoured to satisfy him with regard to the violence committed on his uncle and brother: But Edward, much attached to these near relations, by whom he had been tenderly educated, was not such a master of dissimulation as to conceal his displeasure [e].

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The earl of Rivers arrested. 1st of May.

The people, however, were extremely rejoiced at this revolution; and the duke was received in London with the loudest acclamations: But the Queen no sooner received intelligence of her brother's imprisonment, than she foresaw, that Gloucester's violence would not stop there, and that her own ruin, if not that of all her children, was finally determined. She therefore fled into the sanctuary of Westminster, attended by the marquis of Dorset; and she carried thither the five princesses, to-

4th May.

[d] Hist. Croyl. cont. p. 564, 565. [e] Sir T. More, p. 484.

gether

CHAP. XXIII. 1483.

gether with the duke of York [f]. She truſted, that the eccleſiaſtical privileges, which had formerly, during the total ruin of her huſband and family, given her protection againſt the fury of the Lancaſtrian faction, would not now be violated by her brother-in-law, while her ſon was ſeated on the throne; and ſhe reſolved to await there the return of better fortune. But Gloceſter, anxious to have the duke of York in his power, propoſed to take him by force from the ſanctuary; and he repreſented to the privy council, both the indignity put upon the government by the Queen's ill-grounded apprehenſions, and the neceſſity of the young prince's appearance at the enſuing coronation of his brother. It was farther alledged, that eccleſiaſtical privileges were originally calculated only to give protection to unhappy men, perſecuted for their debts or crimes; and were entirely uſeleſs to a perſon, who, by reaſon of his tender age, could lie under the burden of neither, and who, for the ſame reaſon, was utterly incapable of claiming ſecurity from any ſanctuary. But the two archbiſhops, cardinal Bourchier, the primate, and Rotheram archbiſhop of York, proteſting againſt the ſacrilege of this meaſure; it was agreed, that they ſhould firſt endeavour to bring the Queen to compliance by perſuaſion, before any violence ſhould be employed againſt her. Theſe prelates were known to be perſons of integrity and honour; and being themſelves entirely perſuaded of the ſincerity of the duke's intentions, they employed every argument, accompanied with zealous entreaties, exhortations, and aſſurances, to bring her over to the ſame opinion. She continued long obſtinate, and inſiſted, that the duke of York, by living in the ſanctuary, was not only ſecure himſelf, but gave alſo ſecurity to the King, whoſe life

[f] Hiſt. Croyl. cont. p. 565.

no

no one would dare to attempt, while his ſucceſſor and avenger remained in ſafety. But finding, that no one ſupported her in her ſentiments, and that force, in caſe of refuſal, was threatened by the council, ſhe at laſt complied, and produced her ſon to the two prelates. She was here on a ſudden ſtruck with a kind of preſage of his future fate: She tenderly embraced him; ſhe bedewed him with her tears; and bidding him an eternal adieu, delivered him, with many expreſſions of regret and reluctance, into their cuſtody [g]. CHAP. XXIII. 1483.

THE duke of Gloceſter, being the neareſt male of the royal family capable of exerciſing the government, ſeemed fully intitled, by the cuſtoms of the realm, to the office of protector; and the council, not waiting for the conſent of parliament, inſtalled him, without ſcruple, in that high dignity [h]. The general prejudice entertained by the nobility againſt the Queen and her kindred, occaſioned this precipitation and irregularity; and no one foreſaw any danger to the ſucceſſion, much leſs to the life of the infant princes, from a meaſure ſo obvious and ſo natural. Beſides that the duke had hitherto been able to cover, by the moſt profound diſſimulation, his fierce and ſavage nature; the numerous iſſue of Edward, together with the two children of Clarence, ſeemed to be an eternal obſtacle to his ambition; and it appeared equally impracticable for him to diſpatch ſo many perſons poſſeſſed of a preferable title, and imprudent to exclude them. But a man, who had abandoned all principles of honour and humanity, was ſoon carried by his predominant paſſion beyond the reach of fear or precaution; and Gloceſter, having ſo far ſucceeded in his views, no longer heſitated in removing the farther obſtructions which lay between him and the crown. The death of Duke of Gloceſter protector.

[g] Sir T. More, p. 491. [h] Hiſt. Croyl. cont. p. 566.

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the earl of Rivers, and of the other priſoners detained in Pomfret, was firſt determined; and he eaſily obtained the conſent of the duke of Buckingham, as well as of lord Haſtings, to this violent and ſanguinary meaſure. However eaſy it was, in thoſe illegal and barbarous times, to procure a ſentence againſt the moſt innocent perſon, it appeared ſtill more eaſy to diſpatch an enemy, without any trial or form of proceſs; and orders were accordingly iſſued to Sir Richard Ratcliffe, a proper inſtrument in the hands of this tyrant, to cut off the heads of the noble priſoners. The protector then aſſailed the fidelity of Buckingham by all the arguments capable of ſwaying a vicious mind, which knew no motive of action but intereſt and ambition. He repreſented, that the murder of perſons ſo nearly related to the King, whom that prince profeſſed ſo openly to love, and whoſe injuries he ſo much reſented, would never paſs unpuniſhed; and all the actors in that ſcene were bound in prudence to prevent the effects of his future vengeance: That it would be impoſſible to keep the Queen forever at a diſtance from her ſon, and equally impoſſible to prevent her from inſtilling into his tender mind the thoughts of retaliating, by like executions, the ſanguinary inſults committed on her family: That the only method of obviating theſe miſchiefs was by putting the ſceptre into the hands of a man, of whoſe friendſhip the duke might be aſſured, and whoſe years and experience taught him to pay reſpect to merit and to the rights of antient nobility: And that the ſame neceſſity which had carried them ſo far in reſiſting the uſurpation of theſe intruders, muſt juſtify them in attempting farther innovations, and in making, by national conſent, a new ſettlement of the ſucceſſion. To theſe reaſons, he added the offers of great private advantages to the duke of Buckingham, and he eaſily

easily obtained from him a promise of supporting him in all his enterprizes. CHAP. XXIII.

THE duke of Gloceſter, knowing the importance of gaining lord Haſtings, ſounded at a diſtance his ſentiments, by the means of one Cateſby, a lawyer, who was a great confident of that nobleman; but found him impregnable in his allegiance and fidelity to the children of Edward, who had ever honoured him with his friendſhip[1]. He ſaw, therefore, that there was no longer any meaſures to be kept with him; and he determined to ruin utterly the man, whom he deſpaired of engaging to concur in his uſurpation. On the very day when Rivers, Gray, and Vaughan, were executed, or rather murdered, at Pomfret, by Haſtings's advice, the protector ſummoned a council in the Tower; whither that nobleman, ſuſpecting no deſign againſt him, repaired without heſitation. The duke of Gloceſter was capable of committing the moſt bloody and treacherous murders with the utmoſt coolneſs and indifference. On taking his place at the council-board, he appeared in the eaſieſt and moſt jovial humour in the world. He ſeemed to indulge himſelf in familiar converſation with the counſellors, before they ſhould enter upon buſineſs; and having paid ſome compliments to Morton, biſhop of Ely, on the good and early ſtrawberries which he raiſed in his garden at Holborn, he begged the favour of having a diſh of them, which that prelate immediately diſpatched a ſervant to bring him. The protector then left the council, as if called away by ſome other buſineſs; but ſoon after returning with an angry and enflamed countenance, he aſked them, what puniſhment thoſe deſerved that had plotted againſt *his* life, who was ſo nearly related to the King, and was entruſted with the adminiſtration of the govern- 1483. 13th June.

[1] Sir T. More, p. 493.

ment?

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ment? Haſtings replied, that they merited the puniſhment of traitors. *Theſe traitors*, cried the protector, *are the ſorcereſs, my brother's wife, and Jane Shore, his miſtreſs, with others, their aſſociates: See to what a condition they have reduced me by their incantations and witchcraft:* Upon which he laid bare his arm, all ſhrivelled and decayed. But the counſellors, who knew that this infirmity had attended him from his birth, looked at each other in amazement; and above all, lord Haſtings, who as he had, ſince Edward's death, engaged in an intrigue with Jane Shore [k], was naturally anxious concerning the iſſue of theſe extraordinary proceedings. *Certainly, my lord*, ſaid he, *if they be guilty of theſe crimes, they deſerve the ſevereſt puniſhment. And do you reply to me*, exclaimed the Protector, *with your* ifs *and your* ands? *You are the chief abettor of that witch Shore: You are yourſelf a traitor: And I ſwear by St. Paul, that I will not dine before your head be brought me.* He ſtruck the table with his hand: Armed men ruſhed in at the ſignal: The counſellors were thrown into the utmoſt conſternation: And one of the guards, as if by accident or miſtake, aimed a blow at lord Stanley, with a poll-ax, who, aware of the danger, ſlunk below the table, and tho' he ſaved his life, he received a ſevere wound on the head, in the

[k] Sir Thomas More, who has been followed, or rather tranſcribed, by all the hiſtorians of this ſhort reign, ſays, that Jane Shore had fallen into connexions with lord Haſtings; and this account agrees beſt with the courſe of the events: But in a proclamation of Richard's, to be found in Rymer, vol. xii. p. 204, the marquis of Dorſet is reproached with theſe connexions. This reproach, however, might have been invented by Richard, or founded only on popular rumour; and is not ſufficient to overbalance the authority of Sir Thomas More. The proclamation is remarkable for the hypocritical purity of manners affected by Richard: This bloody and treacherous tyrant upbraids the marquis and others, with their gallantries and intrigues as the moſt terrible enormities.

pro-

protector's presence. Hastings was seized, was hurried away, and instantly beheaded on a timber-log, which lay in the court of the Tower [l]. Two hours after, a proclamation, well penned and fairly wrote, was read to the citizens of London, enumerating Hastings's offences, and apologizing to them, from the suddenness of the discovery, for the sudden execution of that nobleman, who was very popular among them: But the saying of a merchant was much talked of on that occasion, who remarked, that the proclamation was certainly drawn by the spirit of prophecy [m].

CHAP. XXIII. 1483. Execution of lord Hastings.

Lord Stanley, the archbishop of York, the bishop of Ely, and other counsellors, were committed prisoners in different chambers of the Tower: And the protector, in order to carry on the farce of his accusations, ordered the goods of Jane Shore to be seized; and he summoned her to answer before the council for sorcery and inchantment. But as no proofs, which could be received even in that ignorant age, were produced against her, he ordered her to be tried in the spiritual court, for her adulteries and lewdness; and she did penance in a white sheet at St. Paul's before the whole people. This lady was born of reputable parents in London, was well educated, and married to a substantial citizen; but unhappily, views of interest, more than the maid's inclinations, had been consulted in this match, and her mind, tho' framed for virtue, had proved unable to resist the allurements of Edward, who solicited her favours. But while seduced from her duty by this gay and amorous monarch, she still made herself respectable by her other virtues; and the ascendant, which her charms and vivacity long maintained over him, was all employed in acts

[l] Hist. Croyl. cont. p. 566.

[m] Sir T. More, p. 496.

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of beneficence and humanity. She was ſtill forward to oppoſe calumny, to protect the oppreſſed, to relieve the indigent; and her good offices, the genuine reſult of her heart, never waited the ſolicitation of preſents, or the hopes of reciprocal favours. But ſhe lived not only to feel the bitterneſs of ſhame impoſed on her by this barbarous tyrant, but to experience in old age and poverty, the ingratitude of thoſe courtiers, who had long ſolicited her friendſhip, and been protected by her credit. No one, among the great multitudes, whom ſhe had obliged, appeared to bring her conſolation or relief: She languiſhed out her life in ſolitude and indigence: And amidſt a court, enured to the moſt atrocious crimes, the frailties of this woman juſtified all violations of friendſhip towards her, and all oblivion of former favours.

The protector aims at the crown.

THOSE acts of violence, exerciſed againſt all the neareſt connexions of the late King, prognoſticated the ſevereſt fate to his defenceleſs children; and after the murder of Haſtings, the protector made no longer a ſecret of his intentions to uſurp the crown. The licentious life of Edward, who was not reſtrained in his pleaſures by any principle either of honour or prudence, afforded a pretence for declaring his marriage with the Queen invalid, and all his poſterity illegitimate. It was aſſerted, that before his eſpouſals with the lady Elizabeth Gray, he had paid court to the lady Eleanor Talbot, daughter of the earl of Shrewſbury; and being repulſed by the virtue of that lady, he was obliged, ere he could gratify his deſires, to conſent to a private marriage, without any witneſſes, by Stillington, biſhop of Bath, who afterwards revealed the ſecret [n]: It was alſo maintained, that the act of attainder, paſſed againſt the duke of Clarence,

[n] Hiſt. Croyl. cont. p. 567. Comines. Sir Thomas More, p. 482.

had

had virtually incapacitated his children from succeeding to the crown; and these two families being set aside, the protector of course remained the only true and legitimate heir of the house of York. But as it would be difficult, if not impossible, to prove the preceding marriage of the late King; and as the principle which excluded the heirs of an attainted blood, from private successions was never extended to the crown; the protector resolved to make use of another plea still more shameful and scandalous. His partizans were taught to maintain, that both Edward IV. and the duke of Clarence, were illegitimate; that the dutchess of York had received different lovers into her bed, who were the fathers of these children; that their resemblance to those gallants was a sufficient proof of their spurious birth; and that the duke of Gloucester alone, of all her sons, appeared, by his features and countenance, to be the lawful offspring of the duke of York. Nothing can be imagined more impudent than this assertion, which threw so foul an imputation on his own mother, a princess of irreproachable virtue, and then alive; yet the place chosen for first promulgating it was the pulpit, before the whole people, and in the protector's presence. Dr. Shaw was appointed to preach in St. Paul's; and having chosen this passage for his text, *Bastard slips shall not thrive*, he enlarged on all the topics, which could discredit the birth of Edward IV. the duke of Clarence, and of all their children. He then broke out in a panegyric on the duke of Gloucester; and exclaimed, "Behold this excellent prince, the express image of his noble father, the genuine descendant of the house of York, bearing, no less in the virtues of his mind, than in the features of his countenance, the character of the gallant Richard, once your hero and favourite: He alone is entitled to your allegiance: He must deliver you from the dominion of

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22d June.

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"all intruders: He alone can reſtore the loſt glory and "honour of the nation." It was previouſly contrived, that, as the doctor ſhould pronounce theſe words, the duke of Gloceſter ſhould enter the church; and it was expected that the audience ſhould cry out, *God ſave King Richard*; which would immediately have been laid hold of as a popular conſent, and interpreted to be the voice of the nation: But by a ridiculous miſtake, worthy of the whole ſcene, the duke did not appear, till after this exclamation was already recited by the preacher. The doctor was therefore obliged to repeat his rhetorical figure out of its proper place: The audience, leſs from the abſurd conduct of the diſcourſe, than from their deteſtation of theſe proceedings, kept a profound ſilence; and the protector and his preacher, were equally abaſhed at the ill ſucceſs of their ſtratagem. *

But the duke was too far advanced to recede from his criminal and ambitious projects. A new expedient was tried to work on the people. The mayor, who was brother to Dr. Shaw, and entirely in the protector's intereſts, called an aſſembly of the citizens; where the duke of Buckingham, a man who poſſeſſed ſome talents for eloquence, harangued them on the protector's title to the throne, and diſplayed thoſe numerous virtues, of which, he pretended, that prince was poſſeſſed. He next aſked them, whether they would not have the duke for King? and then ſtopt, in expectation of hearing the cry, *God ſave King Richard.* He was ſurprized to obſerve them ſilent; and turning about to the mayor, he aſked him the reaſon. The mayor replied, that perhaps they did underſtand him. Buckingham then repeated his diſcourſe with ſome variation; inforced the ame topics, aſked the ſame queſtion, and was received with the ſame ſilence. "I now ſee the cauſe," ſaid

the mayor, "the citizens are not accuſtomed to be ha- CHAP. XXIII.
"rangued by any but their recorder; and know not
"how to anſwer a perſon of your grace's quality." The 1483.
recorder, Fitz-Williams, was then commanded to repeat the ſubſtance of the duke's ſpeech; but the man, who was very averſe to the office, took care, throughout his whole diſcourſe, to have it underſtood, that he ſpoke nothing of himſelf, and that he only conveyed to them the ſenſe of the duke of Buckingham. Still the audience kept a profound ſilence: "This is wonderful obſtinacy," cried the duke: "Expreſs your meaning, my friends,
"one way or other: When we apply to you on this occa-
"ſion, it is merely from the regard which we bear to
"you. The lords and commons have ſufficient autho-
"rity, without your conſent, to appoint a King: But I
"require you here to declare in plain terms, whether or
"not you will have the duke of Gloceſter for your ſo-
"vereign." After all theſe efforts, ſome of the meaneſt apprentices, incited by the protector's and Buckingham's ſervants, raiſed a feeble cry, *God ſave King Richard* [o]: The ſentiments of the nation were now ſufficiently declared: The voice of the people was the voice of God: And Buckingham, with the mayor, haſtened to Bay- 25th June.
nard's caſtle, where the protector then reſided, that they might engage him to aſſume the government.

When Richard was told, that a great multitude was in the court, he refuſed to appear to them, and pretended to be apprehenſive for his perſonal ſafety: A circumſtance much taken notice of by Buckingham, who obſerved to the citizens, that the prince was ignorant of the whole deſign. At laſt, he was perſuaded to come forth, but he ſtill kept at ſome diſtance; and he aſked the meaning of their intruſion and importunity. Buckingham told him,

[o] Sir Thomas More, p. 496.

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that the nation were reſolved to have him for King: The protector declared his purpoſe to maintain his loyalty to the preſent ſovereign, and exhorted them to adhere to the ſame reſolution. He was told, that the nation were determined to have another prince; and if he rejected their unanimous voice, they muſt look out for one, who would be more compliant. This argument was too powerful to be reſiſted: He was prevailed on to accept of the crown: And he thenceforth acted as legitimate and rightful ſovereign.

The protector aſſumes the throne.

THIS ridiculous farce was ſoon after followed by a ſcene truly tragical: The murder of the two infant princes. Richard ſent orders to Sir Robert Brakenbury, conſtable of the Tower, to put his nephews to death; but this gentleman, who had ſentiments of honour, refuſed to have any hand in the infamous office. The tyrant then ſent Sir James Tyrrel, who promiſed obedience; and he ordered Brakenbury to reſign to this gentleman the keys of the Tower for one night. Tyrrel, chooſing three aſſociates, Slater, Dighton and Foreſt, came in the night-time to the door of the chamber where the princes were lodged; and ſending in the aſſaſſins, he bid them execute their commiſſion; while he himſelf ſtaid without. They found the young princes in bed, and fallen into a ſound ſleep. After ſuffocating them with the bolſter and pillows, they ſhowed their naked bodies to Tyrrel, who ordered them to be buried at the ſtair foot, deep in the ground, under a heap of ſtones [p]. Theſe circumſtances were all confeſſed by the actors in the following reign; and they were never puniſhed for the crime: Probably, becauſe Henry, whoſe maxims of government were extremely arbitrary, deſired to eſtabliſh it as a principle, that the commands of the

Murder of Edward V. and of the duke of York.

[p] Sir T. More, p. 501.

reigning

reigning ſovereign ought to juſtify every enormity in thoſe who paid obedience to them. But there is one circumſtance not ſo eaſy to be accounted for: It is pretended, that Richard, diſpleaſed with this indecent manner of burying his nephews, whom he had murdered, gave his chaplain orders to dig up the bodies, and to inter them in conſecrated ground; and as the man died ſoon after, the place of their burial remained unknown, and the bodies could never be found by any ſearch, which Henry VII. could make for them. Yet in the reign of Charles II. when there was occaſion to remove ſome ſtones and to dig into the very ſpot, which was mentioned as the place of their firſt interment, the bones of two perſons were there found, which by their ſize correſponded exactly to the age of Edward and his brother: They were concluded with certainty to be the remains of thoſe princes, and were interred under a marble monument by orders of King Charles [q]. Perhaps, Richard's chaplain had died before he found an opportunity of executing his maſter's commands; and the bodies being ſuppoſed to be already removed, a diligent ſearch was not made for them by Henry in the place where they had been interred.

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[q] Kennet, p. 551.

RICHARD III.

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1483. THE firſt acts of Richard's adminiſtration were to beſtow rewards on thoſe who had aſſiſted him in uſurping the crown, and to gain by favours thoſe, who, he thought, were beſt able to ſupport his future government. Thomas, lord Howard, was created duke of Norfolk; Sir Thomas Howard, his ſon, earl of Surrey; lord Lovel, a viſcount by the ſame name; even lord Stanley was ſet at liberty and made lord ſteward of the houſhold. This nobleman had become obnoxious by his firſt oppoſition to Richard's views, and alſo by his marrying the counteſs dowager of Richmond, the heireſs of the Somerſet family; but ſenſible of the neceſſity of ſubmiſſion to the preſent government, he counterfeited ſuch zeal for Richard's cauſe, that he was received into favour, and even found means to be entruſted with the moſt important commands by that politic and jealous tyrant.

BUT the perſon, who, both from the greatneſs of his ſervices, and the power and ſplendor of his family, was beſt intitled to favours under the new government, was the duke of Buckingham; and Richard ſeemed determined to ſpare no pains nor bounty in ſecuring him to his intereſts. Buckingham was deſcended from a daughter of Thomas of Woodſtock, duke of Gloceſter, uncle to Richard II. and by this pedigree, he was both allied to the royal family, and had claims for dignities as well as eſtates, of a very extenſive nature. The duke of Gloceſter, and Henry earl of Derby, afterwards Henry IV. had married the two daughters and co-heirs of Bohun, earl of Hereford, one of the greateſt of the antient barons, whoſe immenſe property came thus to be divided

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divided into two ſhares. The one was inherited by the family of Buckingham; the other was united to the crown by the family of Lancaſter, and after the forfeiture of that royal line, was ſeized as legally devolved to them, by the ſovereigns of the houſe of York. The duke of Buckingham laid hold of the preſent opportunity, and claimed the reſtitution of that portion of the Hereford eſtate, which had eſcheated to the crown, as well as of the great office of conſtable, which had long continued by inheritance in his anceſtors of that family. Richard readily complied with theſe demands, which were probably the price ſtipulated to Buckingham for his aſſiſtance in promoting the uſurpation. That nobleman was inſtalled in the office of conſtable; he received a grant of the eſtate of Hereford [r]; many other dignities and honours were conferred upon him; and the King thought himſelf ſecure of preſerving the fidelity of a man, whoſe intereſts ſeemed to be ſo cloſely connected with thoſe of the preſent government.

Duke of Buckingham diſcontented.

BUT it was impoſſible, that friendſhip could long remain inviolate between two men of ſuch corrupt morals as Richard and the duke of Buckingham. Hiſtorians aſcribe their firſt quarrel to the King's refuſal of making reſtitution of the Hereford eſtate; but it is certain from records, that he paſſed a grant for that purpoſe, and that the full demands of Buckingham were ſatisfied in this particular. Perhaps, Richard was ſoon ſenſible of the danger which might enſue from conferring ſuch an immenſe property on a man of ſo turbulent a character, and afterwards raiſed difficulties about the execution of his own grant: Perhaps he refuſed ſome other demands of Buckingham, whom he found it impoſſible to ſatisfy for his paſt ſervices: Perhaps, he reſolved, ac-

[r] Dugdale's Baron. vol. i. p. 168, 169.

cording

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cording to the usual maxim of politicians, to seize the first opportunity of ruining this powerful subject, who had been the principal instrument of his own elevation; and the discovery of this intention begot the first suspicions in the duke of Buckingham. However this may be, it is certain, that the duke, soon after Richard's accession, began to form a conspiracy against the government, and attempted to overthrow that usurpation, which he himself had so zealously contributed to establish.

NEVER was there an usurpation in any country more flagrant than that of Richard, nor more repugnant to every principle of justice and public interest. His claim was entirely founded on impudent allegations, never attempted to be proved, some of them incapable of proof, and all of them, implying scandalous reflections on his own family, and on the persons with whom he was the most nearly connected. His title was never acknowledged by any national assembly, scarce even by the lowest populace to whom he appealed; and had become prevalent merely for want of some person of distinction, who might stand forth against him, and give a voice to those sentiments of general detestation, which arose in every bosom. Were men disposed to pardon these violations of public right, the sense of private and domestic duty, which is not to be effaced in the most barbarous times, must have begot an abhorrence against him; and have represented the murder of the young and innocent princes, his nephews, with whose protection he had been entrusted, in the most odious colours imaginable. To endure such a bloody usurper seemed to draw disgrace upon the nation, and to be attended with immediate danger to every individual, who was distinguished by his birth, merit, or services. Such was become the general voice of the people; all parties were united in the same senti-

ſentiments; and the Lancaſtrians, ſo long oppreſſed, and, of late, ſo much diſcredited, felt their blaſted hopes again revive, and anxiouſly attended to the conſequences of theſe extraordinary events. The duke of Buckingham, whoſe family had been devoted to that intereſt, and who, by his mother, a daughter of Edmund, duke of Somerſet, was allied to the houſe of Lancaſter, was eaſily inclined to eſpouſe the cauſe of this party, and to endeavour the reſtoring it to its antient ſuperiority. Morton, biſhop of Ely, a zealous Lancaſtrian, whom the King had impriſoned, and had afterwards committed to the cuſtody of Buckingham, encouraged theſe ſentiments; and by his exhortations the duke caſt his eye on the young earl of Richmond, as the only perſon, who could free the nation from the tyranny of the preſent uſurper [s].

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HENRY, earl of Richmond, was at this time detained in a kind of honourable cuſtody by the duke of Brittany; and his deſcent, which ſeemed to give him ſome pretenſions to the crown, had been a great object of jealouſy both in the late and in the preſent reign. John, the firſt duke of Somerſet, who was grandſon of John of Gaunt, by a ſpurious branch, but legitimated by act of parliament, had left only one daughter, Margaret; and his younger brother, Edmund, had ſucceeded him in his titles, and in a conſiderable part of his fortune. Margaret had eſpouſed Edmund, earl of Richmond, half brother of Henry VI. and ſon of Sir Owen Tudor and Catherine of France, relict of Henry V. and ſhe bore him only one ſon, who received the name of Henry, and who, after his father's death, inherited the honours and fortune of Richmond. His mother, being a widow, had eſpouſed in ſecond marriage Sir Henry Stafford, uncle to Buckingham, and after the death of that gentleman, had married

The earl of Richmond.

[s] Hiſt. Croyl. cont. p. 568.

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ried the preſent lord Stanley; but had no children by either of theſe huſbands; and her ſon, Henry, was thus, in the event of her death, the only lawful heir of all her fortunes. But this was not the moſt conſiderable advantage, which he had reaſon to expect from her ſucceſſion: He would repreſent the eldeſt branch of the houſe of Somerſet; he would inherit all the title of that family to the crown; and tho' its claim, while any legitimate branch ſubſiſted of the houſe of Lancaſter, had always been much diſregarded, the zeal of faction, after the death of Henry VI. and the murder of prince Edward, immediately conferred a weight and conſideration upon it.

KING Edward IV. finding, that all the Lancaſtrians had caſt their eyes towards the young earl of Richmond, as the object of their hopes, thought him alſo worthy of his attention; and purſued him into his retreat in Brittany, whither his uncle, the earl of Pembroke, had carried him, after the battle of Teukeſbury, ſo fatal to his party. He applied to Francis II. duke of Brittany, who was his ally, a weak but a good prince; and deſired him to deliver up this fugitive, who might be the ſource of future diſturbances in England: But the duke, averſe to ſo diſhonourable a propoſal, would only conſent, that, for the ſecurity of Edward, the young nobleman ſhould be detained in cuſtody; and he received an annual penſion from England for the ſafe keeping or ſubſiſtance of his priſoner. But towards the end of Edward's reign, when the kingdom was menaced with a war both from France and Scotland, the anxieties of the Engliſh court with regard to Henry were very much encreaſed; and Edward made a new propoſal to the duke, which covered, under the faireſt appearances, the moſt bloody and treacherous intentions. He pretended, that

he

he was desirous of gaining his enemy, and of uniting him to his own family by a marriage with his daughter, Elizabeth; and he solicited to have him sent over to England, for the executing a scheme, which would redound so much to his advantage. These pretences, seconded by bri es to Peter Landais, a corrupt minister, by whom the duke was entirely governed, gained credit with the court of Brittany: Henry was delivered into the hands of the English agents: He was ready to embark: When a suspicion of Edward's real design was suggested to the duke, who recalled his orders, and thus saved the unhappy youth from the imminent danger, which hung over him. CHAP. XXIII. 1483.

THESE symptoms of continued jealousy in the reigning family of England both seemed to give some authority to Henry's pretensions, and made him the object of general favour and compassion, on account of the dangers and persecutions to which he was exposed. The universal detestation of Richard's conduct turned still more the attention of the nation towards him; and as all the descendants of the house of York were either women or minors, he seemed to be the only person from whom the nation could expect the expulsion of the odious and bloody tyrant. But notwithstanding these circumstances, which were so favourable to Henry, Buckingham and the bishop of Ely well knew, that there would still lie many obstacles in his way to the throne; and that tho' the nation had been extremely divided between Henry VI. and the duke of York, when present possession and hereditary right stood in opposition to each other; yet, so soon as these titles were conjoined by Edward IV. the bulk of the people had come over to the reigning family; and the Lancastrians had extremely decayed, both in numbers and authority. It was therefore suggested by Morton,

CHAP. XXIII. 1483.

Morton, and readily aſſented to by the duke, that the only means of overturning the preſent uſurpation, was to unite the oppoſite factions, by contracting a marriage between the earl of Richmond and the princeſs Elizabeth, eldeſt daughter of King Edward, and thereby blending together the oppoſite pretenſions of their families, which had ſo long been the ſource of public diſorders and convulſions. They were ſenſible, that the people were extremely deſirous of repoſe after ſo many bloody and deſtructive commotions; that both Yorkiſts and Lancaſtrians, who now lay equally under oppreſſion, would embrace this ſcheme with ardour; and that the proſpect of reconciling the two parties, which was in itſelf ſo deſirable an end, would, when added to the general hatred of the preſent government, render their cauſe abſolutely invincible. In conſequence of theſe views, the prelate, by means of Reginald Bray, ſteward to the counteſs of Richmond, opened the firſt propoſals of ſuch an union to that lady; and the ſcheme appeared ſo advantageous for her ſon, and, at the ſame time, ſo likely to ſucceed, that it admitted not of the leaſt heſitation. Dr. Lewis, a Welſh phyſician, who had acceſs to the Queen-dowager in her ſanctuary, carried the propoſals to her; and found, that revenge for the murder of her brother and of her three ſons, apprehenſions for her ſurviving family, reſentment of her confinement and oppreſſions, eaſily overcame all her prejudices againſt the houſe of Lancaſter, and procured her approbation of a marriage, to which the age and birth, as well as the preſent ſituation, of the two parties, ſeemed ſo naturally to invite them. She ſecretly borrowed a ſum of money in the city, ſent it over to the earl of Richmond, required his oath to fulfil the marriage as ſoon as he ſhould arrive in England, adviſed him to levy as many foreign forces as

possible, and promised to join him, on his first appearance, with all the friends and partizans of her family. CHAP. XXIII.

THE plan being thus laid upon the solid foundations of good sense and sound policy, it was secretly communicated to the principal persons of both parties in all the counties of England; and a wonderful alacrity appeared in every order of men, to forward its success and completion. But it was impossible, that so extensive a conspiracy could be conducted so secretly as entirely to escape the jealous and vigilant eye of Richard; and he soon received intelligence, that his enemies, headed by the duke of Buckingham, were forming some design against his authority. He immediately put himself in a posture of defence by levying some troops in the North; and he summoned the duke to appear at court, in such terms as seemed to promise him a renewal of their former friendship. But that nobleman, well acquainted with the barbarity and treachery of Richard, replied only by taking arms in Wales, and giving the signal to his accomplices for a general insurrection in all parts of England. But there happened at that very time to fall such heavy rains, so incessant and continued, as exceeded any known in the memory of man; and the Severne, with the other rivers in that neighbourhood, swelled to a height which rendered them impassable, and prevented Buckingham from marching into the heart of England to join his associates. The Welshmen, partly moved by superstition at this extraordinary event, partly distressed by famine in their camp, fell off from him; and Buckingham finding himself deserted by his followers, put on a disguise, and took shelter in the house of Banister, an old servant of his family. But being detected in his retreat, he was brought to the King at Salisbury; and was instantly tried, condemned, and executed, according to

1483.

October.

Buckingham executed.

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to the ſummary method practiſed in thoſe ages [z]. The other conſpirators, who took arms in four different places, at Exeter, at Saliſbury, at Newbury, at Maidſtone, hearing of the duke of Buckingham's misfortunes, deſpaired of ſucceſs, and immediately diſperſed themſelves.

1483.

THE marquis of Dorſet and biſhop of Ely made their eſcape beyond ſea: Many others were equally fortunate. Several fell into Richard's hands, of whom he made ſome examples. His executions ſeem not to have been remarkably ſevere; tho' we are told of one gentleman, William Colingbourne, who ſuffered under colour of this rebellion, but in reality for a diſtich of quibbling verſes, which he had compoſed againſt Richard and his miniſters [a]. The earl of Richmond, in concert with his friends, had ſet ſail from St. Malo's, carrying on board a body of 5000 men, levied in foreign parts; but his fleet being at firſt drove back by a ſtorm, he appeared not on the coaſt of England till after the diſperſion of all his friends; and he found himſelf obliged to return to the court of Brittany.

1484.

THE King, thus triumphant in all places, and ſtrengthened by this unſucceſsful attempt to dethrone him, ventured at laſt to ſummon a parliament; a meaſure which his crimes and flagrant uſurpation had made him hitherto decline. Tho' it was natural that the parliament, in a conteſt of national parties, ſhould always

23d of Jan.

[z] Hiſt. Croyl. cont. p. 568.

[a] The lines were;

The Rat, the Cat, and Lovel that Dog,
Rule all England under the Hog.

Alluding to the names of Ratcliffe and Cateſby; and to Richard's arms, which were a boar.

adhere

adhere to the victor, he ſeems to have apprehended, leſt his title, founded on no principle, and ſupported by no party, might be rejected by that aſſembly. But his enemies being now at his feet, the parliament had no choice but to recognize his authority, and acknowledge his right to the crown. His only ſon Edward, then a youth of twelve years of age, was created prince of Wales: The duties of tonnage and poundage were granted him for life: And Richard, in order to reconcile the nation to his government, paſſed ſome popular laws, particularly one againſt the late practice of extorting money on pretence of benevolences. CHAP. XXIII. 1484.

ALL the other meaſures of the King tended to the ſame object. Senſible, that the only circumſtance which could give him ſecurity was to gain the confidence of the Yorkiſts, he paid court to the Queen-dowager with ſuch art and addreſs, made ſuch earneſt proteſtations of his ſincere good-will and friendſhip, that this princeſs, tired of confinement, and deſpairing of any ſucceſs from her former projects, ventured to leave her ſanctuary, and to put herſelf and her daughters into the hands of the tyrant. But he ſoon carried farther his views for the eſtabliſhment of his throne. He had married Anne, the ſecond daughter of the earl of Warwic, and widow of Edward prince of Wales, whom Richard himſelf had murdered; but this princeſs having born him but one ſon, who died about this time, he conſidered her as an invincible obſtacle to the ſettlement of his fortune, and he was believed to have carried her off by poiſon; a crime for which the public could not be ſuppoſed to have any very ſolid proof, but which the uſual tenor of his conduct made it reaſonable to ſuſpect. He now thought it in his power to remove the chief perils which threatened his government. The earl of Richmond, he knew,

CHAP. XXIII. 1484.

could never be dangerous but from his projected marriage with the princeſs Elizabeth, the true heir of the crown; and he therefore intended, by means of a papal diſpenſation, to eſpouſe himſelf this princeſs, and thus to unite in his own family their contending titles. The Queen-dowager, eager to recover her loſt authority, neither ſcrupled this alliance, which was very unuſual in England, and was regarded as inceſtuous; nor felt any horror at marrying her daughter to the murderer of her three ſons and of her brother: She even conjoined ſo far her intereſts with thoſe of the uſurper, that ſhe wrote to all her partizans, and among the reſt to her ſon the marquis of Dorſet, deſiring them to withdraw from the earl of Richmond; an injury which the earl could never afterwards forgive: The court of Rome was applied to for a diſpenſation: Richard thought, that he could eaſily defend himſelf during the interval, till it arrived; and he had afterwards the agreeable proſpect of a full and ſecure ſettlement. He flattered himſelf, that the Engliſh nation, ſeeing all danger removed of a diſputed ſucceſſion, would then acquieſce under the dominion of a prince, who was of mature years, of great abilities, and of a genius qualified for government; and that they would forgive him all the crimes which he had committed in paving his way to the throne.

But the crimes of Richard were ſo horrid and ſo ſhocking to humanity, that the natural ſentiments of men, without any political or public views, were ſufficient to render his government unſtable; and every perſon of probity and honour was earneſt to prevent the ſceptre from being farther polluted by that bloody and treacherous hand which held it. All the exiles flocked to the earl of Richmond in Brittany, and exhorted him to haſten his attempt of a new invaſion, and to prevent the

the marriage of the princeſs Elizabeth, which muſt prove ſo fatal to all his hopes. The earl, ſenſible of the urgent neceſſity, but dreading the treachery of Peter Landais, who had entered into a negotiation with Richard for delivering him up, was obliged to attend only to his preſent ſafety; and he made his eſcape to the court of France. The miniſters of Charles VIII. who had now ſucceeded to the throne after the death of his father Lewis, gave him countenance and protection; and being deſirous of raiſing diſturbances to Richard, they ſecretly encouraged the earl in the levies which he made for the ſupport of his enterprize againſt England. The earl of Oxford, whom Richard's ſuſpicions had thrown into confinement, having made his eſcape, here joined Henry; and enflamed his ardour for the attempt, by the favourable accounts which he brought of the diſpoſitions of the Engliſh nation, and their univerſal hatred of Richard's crimes and uſurpation.

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THE earl of Richmond ſet out from Harfleur in Normandy with a retinue of about 2000 perſons; and after a navigation of ſix days, he arrived at Milford-Haven in Wales, where he landed without oppoſition. He directed his courſe to that part of the kingdom, in hopes that the Welſh, who regarded him as their countryman, and who had been already prepoſſeſſed in favour of his cauſe by means of the duke of Buckingham, would join his ſtandard, and enable him to make head againſt the eſtabliſhed government. Richard, who knew not in what quarter he might expect the invader, had taken poſt at Nottingham, in the centre of the kingdom; and having given commiſſions to different perſons in the ſeveral counties, whom he empowered to oppoſe his enemy, he propoſed in perſon to fly, on the firſt alarm, to the

1485. Invaſion by the earl of Richmond. 7th of Auguſt.

CHAP. XXIII. 1485.

place which was expoſed to danger. Sir Rice ap Thomas and Sir Walter Herbert were entruſted with this authority in Wales; but the former immediately deſerted to Henry; the ſecond made but feeble oppoſition to him: And the earl, advancing towards Shrewſbury, received every day ſome reinforcement from his partizans. Sir Gilbert Talbot joined him with all the vaſſals and retainers of the family of Shrewſbury: Sir Thomas Bourchier, Sir Walter Hungerford, brought their friends to ſhare his fortune; and the appearance of men of diſtinction in his camp made already his cauſe wear a favourable aſpect.

BUT the danger to which Richard was chiefly expoſed, proceeded not ſo much from the zeal of his open enemies, as from the infidelity of his pretended friends. Scarce any nobleman of diſtinction was ſincerely attached to his cauſe, except the duke of Norfolk; and all thoſe who feigned the moſt loyalty were only watching an opportunity to betray and deſert him. But the perſons of whom he entertained the greateſt ſuſpicion, were the lords Stanley and his brother Sir William; whoſe connexions with the earl of Richmond, notwithſtanding their profeſſions of attachment to his perſon, were never entirely forgot or overlooked by him. When he empowered lord Stanley to levy forces, he ſtill retained his eldeſt ſon, lord Strange, as a pledge of his fidelity; and that noblema... was, on this account, obliged to employ great precauti... and reſerve in his proceedings. He raiſed a powerful body of his friends and retainers in Cheſhire and Lancaſhire, but without openly declaring himſelf: And tho' Henry had received ſecret aſſurances of his friendly intention, the armies on both ſides knew not what to infer from his equivocal behaviour. The two rivals, at laſt, approached each other, at Boſworth near Leiceſter; Henry at the head of ſix thouſand men,

22d Aug. Battle of Boſworth.

Richard with an army of above double the number; and a deciſive action was every hour looked for between them. Stanley, who commanded about ſeven thouſand men, took care to poſt himſelf at Atherſtone, not far from the expected field of battle; and he made ſuch a diſpoſition as enabled him on occaſion to join either party. Richard had too much ſagacity not to diſcover his intentions from theſe movements; but he kept the ſecret from his own men for fear of diſcouraging them: He took not immediate revenge on Stanley's ſon, as ſome of his courtiers adviſed him; becauſe he hoped that ſo valuable a pledge would induce the father to prolong ſtill farther his ambiguous conduct: And he haſtened to decide by arms the quarrel with his competitor; being certain, that a victory over the earl of Richmond would enable him to take ample revenge of all his enemies, open and concealed. CHAP. XXIII. 1485.

THE van of Richmond's army, conſiſting of archers, was commanded by John earl of Oxford: Sir Gilbert Talbot led the right wing; Sir John Savage the left: The earl himſelf, accompanied by his uncle, the earl of Pembroke, placed himſelf in the main body. Richard alſo took poſt in *his* main body, and entruſted the command of his van to the duke of Norfolk: As his wings were never engaged, we have not learned the names of the ſeveral commanders. Soon after the battle began, lord Stanley, whoſe conduct in this whole affair diſcovers great precaution and abilities, appeared in the field, and declared for the earl of Richmond. This meaſure, which was ſo unexpected to the men, tho' not to their leaders, had a proportional effect on both armies: It inſpired unuſual courage into Henry's ſoldiers; it threw Richard's into diſmay and confuſion. The intrepid tyrant, ſenſible of his deſperate ſituation, caſt his eye around the field, and perceiving his rival at no great diſtance, he drove

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againſt him with fury, in hopes, that either Henry's death or his own would ſoon decide the victory between them. He killed with his own hands Sir William Brandon, ſtandard-bearer to the earl: He diſmounted Sir John Cheyney: He was now within reach of Richmond himſelf, who declined not the combat; when Sir William Stanley, breaking in with his troops, ſurrounded Richard, who, fighting bravely to the laſt moment, was overwhelmed by the numbers of his enemies, and periſhed by a fate too mild and honourable for his multiplied and deteſtable enormities. His men every where ſought for ſafety by flight.

Death

THERE fell in this battle about 4000 men on the ſide of the vanquiſhed; and among theſe the duke of Norfolk, the lord Ferrars of Chartley, Sir Richard Ratcliffe, Sir Robert Piercy, and Sir Robert Brakenbury. The loſs was very inconſiderable on the ſide of the victors. Sir William Cateſby, a great inſtrument of Richard's crimes, was taken, and ſoon after beheaded, with ſome others, at Leiceſter. The body of Richard was found in the field, covered with dead enemies, and all beſmeared with blood: It was thrown careleſsly acroſs a horſe; was carried to Leiceſter amid the ſhouts of the inſulting ſpectators; and was interred in the Gray-Friars church of that place.

and character of Richard III.

THE hiſtorians who favour Richard (for even he has met with partizans among the later writers) maintain, that he was well qualified for government, had he legally obtained it; and that he committed no crimes but ſuch as were neceſſary to procure him poſſeſſion of the crown: But this is a very poor apology, when it is confeſſed, that he was ready to commit the moſt horrid crimes, which appeared neceſſary for that purpoſe; and it is certain, that all his courage and capacity, qualities in which he really ſeems not to have been deficient, would never have

have made compenſation to the people for the danger of the precedent, and for the contagious example of vice and murder, exalted upon the throne. This prince was of a ſmall ſtature, hump-backed, and had a very harſh diſagreeable viſage; ſo that his body was in every particular no leſs deformed than his mind. CHAP. XXIII.

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THUS have we purſued the Hiſtory of England thro' a ſeries of many barbarous ages; till we have at laſt reached the dawnings of civility and ſcience, and have the proſpect, both of greater certainty in our hiſtorical narrations, and of being able to preſent to the reader a ſpectacle more worthy of his attention. The want of certainty, however, and of circumſtances, is not alike to be complained of throughout every period of this long narration. This iſland poſſeſſes many antient hiſtorians of good credit, as well as many hiſtorical monuments; and it is rare, that the annals of ſo uncultivated a people, as were the Engliſh as well as the other European nations, after the decline of Roman learning, have been tranſmitted to poſterity ſo compleat, and with ſo little mixture of falſehood and of fable. This advantage we owe entirely to the clergy of the church of Rome; who, founding their authority on their ſuperior knowledge, preſerved the precious literature of antiquity from a total extinction [b]; and under ſhelter of their numerous privileges

[b] Every one that has peruſed the ancient Monkiſh writers, knows, that, however barbarous their own ſtyle, they are full of alluſions to the Latin claſſics, eſpecially the poets. There ſeems alſo in thoſe middle ages to have remained many antient books, that are now loſt. Malmeſbury, who flouriſhed in the reign of Henry I. and King Stephen, quotes Livy's deſcription of Cæſar's paſſage over the Rubicon. Fitz-Stephen, who lived in the reign of Henry II. alludes to a paſſage in the lar-

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leges and immunities, acquired a ſecurity by means of the ſuperſtition, which they would in vain have claimed, from the juſtice and humanity, of thoſe turbulent and licentious ages. Nor is the ſpectacle altogether unentertaining and uninſtructive, which the hiſtory of thoſe times preſents to us. The view of human manners and actions, in all their variety of appearances, is both profitable and agreeable; and if the aſpect in ſome periods ſeems horrid and deformed, we may thence learn to cheriſh with the greater anxiety that ſcience and civility which has ſo cloſe a connexion with virtue and humanity, and which, as it is a ſovereign antidote againſt ſuperſtition, is alſo the moſt effectual remedy againſt vice and diſorders of every kind.

THE riſe, progreſs, perfection, and decline of art and ſcience, are curious objects of contemplation, and intimately connected with a narration of civil tranſactions. The events of no particular period can be fully accounted for, but by conſidering the degrees of advancement, which men have reached in thoſe particulars.

THOSE who caſt their eye on the general revolutions of ſociety, will find, that, as all the improvements of the human mind had reached nearly to their ſtate of perfection about the age of Auguſtus, there was a ſenſible decline from that point or period; and men thenceforth relapſed gradually into ignorance and barbariſm. The

ger hiſtory of Salluſt. In the collection of letters, which paſſes under the name of Thomas a Becket, we ſee how familiar all the antient hiſtory and antient books were to the more ingenious and more dignified churchmen of that time, and conſequently how much that order of men muſt have ſurpaſſed all the other members of the ſociety. That prelate and his friends call each other philoſophers in all the courſe of their correſpondence, and conſider the reſt of the world as ſunk into total ignorance and barbariſm.

unlimited

unlimited extent of the Roman empire, and the conſequent deſpotiſm of the monarchs, extinguiſhed all emulation, debaſed the generous ſpirits of men, and depreſſed that noble flame, by which all the refined arts muſt be cheriſhed and enlivened. The military government, which ſoon ſucceeded, rendered even the lives and properties of men inſecure and precarious; and proved deſtructive to thoſe vulgar and more neceſſary arts of agriculture, manufactures, and commerce; and in the end, to the military art and genius itſelf, by which alone the immenſe fabric of the empire could be ſupported. The irruption of the barbarous nations, which ſoon followed, overwhelmed all human knowledge, which was already far in its decline; and men ſunk every age deeper into ignorance, ſtupidity, and ſuperſtition; till the light of antient ſcience and hiſtory, had very nearly ſuffered a total extinction in all the European nations.

But there is an ultimate point of depreſſion, as well as of exaltation, from which human affairs naturally return in a contrary progreſs, and beyond which they ſeldom paſs either in their advancement or decline. The period, in which the people of Chriſtendom were the loweſt ſunk in ignorance, and conſequently in diſorders of every kind, may juſtly be fixed at the eleventh century, about the age of William the Conqueror; and from that æra, the ſun of ſcience, beginning to re-aſcend, threw out many gleams of light, which preceded the full morning, when letters were revived in the fifteenth century. The Danes and other northern people, who had ſo long infeſted all the coaſts, and even the inland parts of Europe, by their depredations, having now learned the arts of tillage and agriculture, found a ſettled ſubſiſtence at home, and were no longer tempted to deſert their

CHAP. XXIII.

their induſtry, in order to ſeek a precarious livelihood by rapine and by the plunder of their neighbours. The feudal governments alſo, among the more ſouthern nations, were reduced to a kind of ſyſtem; and tho' that ſtrange ſpecies of civil polity was ill fitted to enſure either liberty or tranquillity, it was preferable to the univerſal licence and diſorder, which had every where preceded it. But perhaps there was no event, which tended farther to the improvement of the age, than one, which has not been much remarked, the accidental finding a copy of Juſtinian's Pandects, about the year 1130, in the town of Amalfi in Italy.

THE eccleſiaſtics, who had leiſure, and ſome inclination to ſtudy, immediately adopted with zeal this excellent ſyſtem of juriſprudence, and ſpread the knowledge of it in every part of Europe. Beſides the intrinſic merit of the performance, it was recommended to them by its original connexion with the imperial city of Rome, which, being the ſeat of their religion, ſeemed to acquire a new luſtre and authority, by the diffuſion of its laws over the weſtern world. In leſs than ten years after the diſcovery of the Pandects, Vacarius, under the protection of Theobald, archbiſhop of Canterbury, read public lectures of civil law in the univerſity of Oxford; and the clergy every where, by their example as well as exhortation, were the means of ſpreading the higheſt eſteem for this new ſcience. That order of men, having large poſſeſſions to defend, were in a manner neceſſitated to turn their ſtudies towards the law; and their properties being often endangered by the violence of the princes and barons, it became their intereſt to enforce the obſervance of general and equitable rules, from which alone they could receive protection. As they poſſeſſed all the knowledge

of the age, and were alone acquainted with the habits of thinking, the practice as well as ſcience of the law, fell moſtly into their hands: And tho' the cloſe connexion, which without any neceſſity they formed between the canon and civil law, begot a jealouſy in the laity of England, and prevented the Roman juriſprudence from becoming the municipal law of the country, as was the caſe in many ſtates of Europe, a great part of it was ſecretly transferred into the practice of the courts of juſtice, and the imitation of their neighbours, made the Engliſh gradually endeavour to raiſe their own law from its original ſtate of rudeneſs and imperfection.

It is eaſy to ſee what advantages Europe muſt have reaped by its inheriting at once from the antients, ſo complete an art, which was of itſelf ſo neceſſary for giving ſecurity to all other arts, and which, by refining, and ſtill more, by beſtowing ſolidity on the judgment, ſerved as a model to further improvements. The ſenſible utility of the Roman law both to public and private intereſt recommended the ſtudy of it, at a time when the more exalted and ſpeculative ſciences carried no charms with them; and thus the laſt branch of antient literature, which remained uncorrupted, was happily the firſt tranſmitted to the modern world. For it is remarkable, that in the decline of Roman learning, when the philoſophers were univerſally infected with ſuperſtition and ſophiſtry, and the poets and hiſtorians with barbariſm, the lawyers, who in other countries are ſeldom models of ſcience or politeneſs, were yet able, by the conſtant ſtudy and cloſe imitation of their predeceſſors, to maintain the ſame good ſenſe in their deciſions and reaſonings, and the ſame purity in their language and expreſſion.

What beſtowed an additional merit on the civil law, was the extreme ignorance and imperfection of that juriſ-

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riſprudence, which preceded it among all the European nations, eſpecially among the Saxons or antient Engliſh. What abſurdities prevailed at that time in the adminiſtration of juſtice, may be conceived from the authentic monuments which remain of the antient Saxon laws; where a pecuniary commutation was received for every crime, where ſtated prices were fixed for men's lives and members, where private revenges were authorized for all injuries, where the uſe of the ordeal, corſnet, and afterwards of the duel, was the received method of proof, and where the judges were ruſtic freeholders, aſſembled of a ſudden, and deciding a cauſe from one debate or altercation of the parties. Such a ſtate of ſociety was very little advanced beyond the rude ſtate of nature: Violence univerſally prevailed, inſtead of general and equitable maxims: The pretended liberty of the times, was only an incapacity of ſubmitting to government: And men, not protected by law in their lives and properties, ſought ſhelter, by their perſonal ſervility and attachments, under ſome powerful chieftain, or by voluntary combinations.

THE gradual progreſs of improvement, raiſed the Europeans ſomewhat from this uncultivated ſtate; and affairs, in this iſland particularly, took very early a turn, which was more favourable to juſtice and to liberty. Civil employments and occupations ſoon became honourable among the Engliſh: The ſituation of that people rendered not the perpetual attention to wars ſo neceſſary as among their neighbours, and all regard was not confined to the military profeſſion: The gentry, and even the nobility, began to deem an acquaintance with the law, a requiſite part of education: They were leſs diverted than afterwards from ſtudies of this kind by other ſciences; and in the age of Henry VI. we are told by Forteſcue,

Forteſcue, there were in the Inns of Court about two thouſand ſtudents, moſt of them men of honourable birth, who gave application to this branch of civil knowledge. A circumſtance which proves, that a conſiderable advance was already made in the ſcience of government, and which prognoſticated ſtill a greater.

One chief advantage, which reſulted from the introduction and progreſs of the arts, was the introduction and progreſs of freedom; and this conſequence affected men both in their *perſonal* and *civil* capacities.

If we conſider the antient ſtate of Europe, we ſhall find, that the far greater part of the ſociety were every where bereaved of their *perſonal* liberty, and lived entirely at the will of their maſters. Every one, that was not noble, was a ſlave: The peaſants were ſold along with the land: The few inhabitants of cities were not in a better condition: Even the gentry themſelves were ſubjected to a long train of ſubordination under the greater barons or chief vaſſals of the crown; who, tho' ſeemingly placed in a high ſtate of ſplendor, yet, having but a ſlender protection from the law, were expoſed to every tempeſt of ſtate, and by the precarious condition, in which they lived, paid dearly for the power of oppreſſing and tyrannizing over their inferiors. The firſt incident, which broke in upon this violent ſyſtem of government, was the practice, begun in France, of erecting communities and corporations, endowed with privileges and a ſeparate municipal government, which gave them protection againſt the tyranny of the barons, and which the prince himſelf deemed it prudent to reſpect [a]. The relaxation of the feudal tenures, and an execution,

[a] There appear early ſymptoms of the jealouſy, entertained by the barons againſt the progreſs of the arts, as deſtructive of their licentious power.

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execution, ſomewhat ſtricter, of the public law, beſtowed an independance on vaſſals, which was unknown to their forefathers. And even the peaſants themſelves, tho' later than other orders of the ſtate, made their eſcape from thoſe bonds of villenage or ſlavery, in which they had formerly been retained.

It may appear ſtrange, that the progreſs of the arts, which ſeems, among the Greeks and Romans, to have daily encreaſed the number of ſlaves, ſhould, in later times, have proved ſo general a ſource of liberty; but this difference of the events proceeded from a great difference in the circumſtances, which attended thoſe inſtitutions. The antient barons, being obliged to maintain themſelves continually in a military poſture, and little emulous of elegance or ſplendor, employed not their villains as domeſtic ſervants, much leſs as manufacturers, but compoſed their retinue of free-men, whoſe military ſpirit rendered the chieftain formidable to his neighbours, and who were ready to attend him in every warlike enterprize. The villains were occupied entirely in the cultivation of their maſter's land, and paid their rents either in corn and cattle and other produce of the farm, or in ſervile offices, which they performed about the baron's family, and upon the farms which he retained in his own poſſeſſion. In proportion as agriculture improved, and money encreaſed, it was found, that theſe

power. A law was enacted, 7 Henry IV. cap. 17. prohibiting any one who did not poſſeſs twenty ſhillings a-year in land from binding his ſons apprentices to any trade. They found already that the cities began to drain the country of the labourers and huſbandmen; and did not foreſee how much the encreaſe of commerce would increaſe the value of their eſtates. See farther, Cotton, p. 179. The Kings, to encourage the boroughs, granted them this privilege, that any villain, who had lived a twelvemonth in any corporation and had been of the gild, ſhould be thenceforth regarded as free.

ſervices,

ſervices, tho' extremely burthenſome to the villain, were of little advantage to the maſter; and that the produce of a large eſtate could be much more conveniently diſpoſed of by the peaſant himſelf, who raiſed it, than by the landlord or his bailiff, who were formerly accuſtomed to receive it. A commutation was therefore made of rents for ſervices, and of money-rents for thoſe in kind; and as men, in a ſubſequent age, diſcovered, that farms were better cultivated where the farmer enjoyed a ſecurity of poſſeſſion, the practice of granting leaſes to the peaſant began to prevail, which entirely broke the bonds of ſervitude, already much relaxed from the former practices. After this manner, villenage went gradually into diſuſe throughout the more civilized parts of Europe: The intereſt of the maſter, as well as that of the ſlave, concurred in this alteration. The lateſt laws which we find in England for the enforcing or regulating this ſpecies of ſervitude, were enacted in the reign of Henry VII. And tho' the antient ſtatutes on this ſubject remain ſtill unrepealed by parliament, it appears, that, before the reign of Elizabeth, the diſtinction of villain and freeman was totally, tho' inſenſibly aboliſhed, and that no perſon remained in the ſtate, to whom the former laws could be applied. CHAP. XXIII.

THUS *perſonal* freedom became almoſt general in Europe; an advantage which paved the way for the encreaſe of *political* or *civil* liberty, and which, even where it was not attended with this ſalutary effect, ſerved to give the members of the community ſome of the moſt conſiderable advantages of it.

THE conſtitution of the Engliſh government, ever ſince the invaſion of this iſland by the Saxons, may boaſt of this pre-eminence, that in no age the will of the monarch was ever entirely abſolute and uncontrouled: But

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But in other reſpects the balance of power has extremely ſhifted among the ſeveral orders of the ſtate; and this fabric has experienced the ſame mutability, which has attended all human inſtitutions.

THE antient Saxons, like the other German nations, where each individual was enured to arms, and where the independance of men was ſecured by a great equality of poſſeſſions, ſeem to have admitted a conſiderable mixture of democracy into their form of government, and to have been one of the freeſt nations, of which there remains any account in the records of hiſtory. After this tribe was ſettled in England, eſpecially after the diſſolution of the Heptarchy, the great extent of the kingdom produced a great inequality in property; and the balance ſeems to have inclined to the ſide of the ariſtocracy. The Norman conqueſt threw more authority into the hands of the ſovereign, which, however, admitted of great controul; tho' derived leſs from the general forms of the conſtitution, which were inaccurate and irregular, than from the independant power enjoyed by each baron in his particular diſtrict or province. The eſtabliſhment of the great charter exalted ſtill higher the Ariſtocracy, impoſed regular limits on royal power, and gradually introduced ſome mixture of Democracy into the conſtitution. But even during this period, from the acceſſion of Edward I. to the death of Richard III. the condition of the commons was nowiſe deſirable; a kind of Poliſh Ariſtocracy prevailed; and tho' the Kings were limited, the people were as yet far from being free. It required the authority almoſt abſolute of the ſovereigns, which took place in the ſubſequent period, to pull down theſe diſorderly and licentious tyrants, who were equal enemies to peace and to freedom, and to eſtabliſh that regular execution of the laws, which, in a following

following age, enabled the people to erect a regular and equitable plan of liberty. CHAP. XXIII.

In each of these successive alterations, the only rule of government, which is intelligible or carries any authority with it, is the established practice of the age, and the maxims of administration, which are at that time prevalent, and universally assented to. Those who, from a pretended respect to antiquity, appeal at every turn to an original plan of the constitution, only cover their turbulent spirit and their private ambition under the appearance of venerable forms; and whatever period they pitch on for their model, they may still be carried back to a more antient period, where they will find the measures of power entirely different, and where every circumstance, by reason of the greater barbarity of the times, will appear still less worthy of imitation. Above all, a civilized nation, like the English, who have happily established the most perfect and most accurate system of liberty, that ever was found compatible with government, ought to be cautious of appealing to the practice of their ancestors, or regarding the maxims of uncultivated ages as certain rules for their present conduct. An acquaintance with the history of the antient periods of their government is chiefly *useful* by instructing them to cherish their present constitution from a comparison or contrast with the condition of those distant times. And it is also *curious*, by shewing them the remote, and commonly faint and disfigured originals of the most finished and most noble institutions, and by instructing them in the great mixture of accident which commonly concurs with a small ingredient of wisdom and foresight, in erecting the complicated fabric of the most perfect government.

Began Nov. 1. 1809

HENRY VII.

CHAP. XXIV.

Acceſſion of Henry VII.——*His title to the crown*——*King's prejudice againſt the houſe of York*——*His joyful reception in London*——*His Coronation*——*Sweating ſickneſs*——*A parliament*——*Entail of the crown*——*King's marriage*——*An inſurrection*——*Diſcontents of the people*——*Lambert Simnel*——*Revolt of Ireland*——*Intrigues of the dutcheſs of Burgundy*——*Lambert Simnel invades England*——*Battle of Stoke.*

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1485. Auguſt 22.

THE victory, which the earl of Richmond gained at Boſworth over Richard the third, was entirely deciſive; being attended, as well with the total rout and diſperſion of the royal army, as with the death of the King himſelf. The joy of ſo great ſucceſs ſuddenly prompted the ſoldiers, in the field of battle, to beſtow on their victorious general the appellation of King, which he had not hitherto aſſumed; and the acclamations of *Long live Henry the ſeventh*, by a natural and unpremeditated movement, reſounded from all quarters. To beſtow ſome appearance of formality on this ſpecies of military election, Sir William Stanley brought a crown of ornament, which Richard wore in battle, and which had been found among the ſpoils; and he put it on the head of the conqueror. Henry himſelf remained not in ſuſpenſe; but immediately, without heſitation, accepted of

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of the magnificent preſent, which was tendered him. He was come to the great criſis of his fortune; and being obliged ſuddenly to determine himſelf, amidſt great difficulties, which he muſt have frequently revolved in his mind, he choſe that part, which his ambition ſuggeſted to him, and to which he ſeemed to be conducted by his preſent proſperous ſucceſs. CHAP. XXIV. 1485.

His title to the crown.

THERE were many titles, on which Henry could found his right to the throne; but no one of them free from great objections, if conſidered, either with reſpect to juſtice or to policy.

DURING ſome years, Henry had been regarded as heir to the houſe of Lancaſter, by the party attached to that family; but the title of the houſe of Lancaſter itſelf to the crown was generally thought to be very ill founded. Henry the fourth, who had firſt raiſed that family to royal dignity, had never clearly determined the foundation of his claim; and while he plainly invaded the order of ſucceſſion, he had not acknowledged the election of the people. The parliament had indeed often recognized the title of the Lancaſtrian princes; but theſe votes had little authority, being conſidered as inſtances of prudent complaiſance towards a family in poſſeſſion of preſent power: And they had accordingly been often reverſed during the late prevalence of the houſe of York. Prudent men alſo, who had been willing, for the ſake of peace, to ſubmit to any eſtabliſhed authority, deſired not to ſee the claims of a family revived, which muſt produce many convulſions at preſent, and which diſjointed for the future the whole ſyſtem of hereditary right. Beſides; allowing the title of the houſe of Lancaſter to be legal, Henry himſelf was not the true heir of that family; and nothing but the obſtinacy, natural to a faction, which never, without the utmoſt reluctance,

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will ſubmit to their antagoniſts, could have engaged the partizans of that houſe to adopt the earl of Richmond as their head. His mother indeed, Margaret, counteſs of Richmond, was ſole daughter and heir of the houſe of Somerſet, deſcended from John of Gaunt duke of Lancaſter: But the birth of the firſt of the Somerſet line was itſelf illegitimate and even adulterous. And tho' the duke of Lancaſter had obtained the legitimation of his natural children by a patent from Richard the ſecond, confirmed in parliament; it might juſtly be doubted, whether this deed could beſtow any title to the crown; ſince in the patent itſelf all the privileges conferred by it are fully enumerated, and the ſucceſſion to the kingdom is expreſly excluded [a]. In all the ſettlements of the crown, made during the reigns of the Lancaſtrian princes, the line of Somerſet had been entirely overlooked; and it was not till the failure of the legitimate branch, that men had paid any attention to their claim. And to add to the general diſſatisfaction againſt Henry's title, his mother, from whom he derived all his right, was ſtill alive; and evidently preceded him in the order of ſucceſſion.

THE title of the houſe of York, both from the plain reaſon of the caſe, and from the late popular government of Edward the fourth, had obtained univerſally the preference in the ſentiments of the people; and Henry might engraft his claim on the right of that family, by his intended marriage with the princeſs Elizabeth, the heireſs of it; a marriage, which he had ſolemnly promiſed to celebrate, and to the expectation of which he had chiefly owed all his paſt ſucceſſes. But many reaſons diſſuaded Henry from adopting this expe-

[a] Rymer, tom. vii. p. 849. Coke's Inſt. 4 Inſt. part 1. p. 37.

dient.

dient. Were he to receive the crown only in right of his ſpouſe, his power, he knew, would be very limited; and he muſt expect rather to enjoy the bare title of King by a ſort of courteſy, than poſſeſs the real authority which belongs to it. Should the princeſs die before him without iſſue, he muſt deſcend from the throne, and give place to the next in ſucceſſion: And even, if his bed ſhould be bleſt with offspring, it ſeemed dangerous to expect, that filial piety in his children would prevail over the ambition of obtaining preſent poſſeſſion of regal power. An act of parliament, indeed, might be eaſily procured to ſettle the crown on him during his life; but Henry knew how much ſuperior the claim of ſucceſſion by blood was to the votes of an aſſembly [b], which had always been overborne by violence in the ſhock of contending titles, and which had ever been more governed by the conjunctures of the times, than by any conſiderations derived from reaſon or public intereſt. CHAP. XXIV. 1485.

THERE was yet a third foundation, on which Henry might reſt his claim, the right of conqueſt, by his victory over Richard, the preſent poſſeſſor of the crown. But beſides that Richard himſelf was deemed no better than an uſurper, the army, which fought againſt him, conſiſted chiefly of Engliſhmen; and a right of conqueſt over England could never be eſtabliſhed by ſuch a victory. Nothing alſo would give greater umbrage to the nation than a claim of this nature; which might be conſtrued as an abolition of all their rights and privileges, and the eſtabliſhment of deſpotic authority in the ſovereign [c]. William himſelf, the Norman, tho' at the head of a powerful and victorious army of foreigners, had at firſt declined the invidious title of conqueror; and

[b] Bacon in Kennet's compleat Hiſtory, p. 579.

[c] Bacon, p. 579.

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it was not till the full eſtabliſhment of his authority, that he had ventured to advance ſo violent and deſtructive a pretenſion.

But Henry knew, that there was another foundation of authority, ſomewhat reſembling the right of conqueſt, to wit, preſent poſſeſſion; and that this title, guarded by vigour and ability, would be ſufficient to ſecure perpetual poſſeſſion of the throne. He had before him the example of Henry the fourth; who, ſupported by no better pretenſion, had ſubdued many inſurrections, and had been able to tranſmit the crown peaceably to his poſterity. He was ſenſible, that this title, which had been perpetuated thro' three ſucceſſions of the family of Lancaſter, might ſtill have ſubſiſted, notwithſtanding the preferable claim of the houſe of York; had not the ſcepter devolved into the hands of Henry the ſixth, which were too feeble to ſuſtain it. Inſtructed by theſe recent experiences, Henry was determined to put himſelf in preſent poſſeſſion of regal authority; and to ſhow all oppoſers, that nothing but force of arms and a ſucceſsful war ſhould be able to expel him. His claim as heir to the houſe of Lancaſter he was reſolved to advance; and never allow it to be diſcuſſed: And he hoped that this title, favoured by the partizans of that family, and ſeconded by preſent power, would ſecure him a perpetual and an independant authority.

These views of Henry are not expoſed to much blame; becauſe founded on good policy, and even on a ſpecies of neceſſity: But there entered into all his meaſures and councils another motive, which admits not of the ſame apology. The violent contentions, which, during ſo long a period, had been maintained between the rival families of York and Lancaſter, and the many ſanguinary revenges which they had mutually exerciſed

King's prejudice againſt the houſe of York.

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on each other, had inflamed the oppoſite factions to a high pitch of animoſity. Henry himſelf, who had ſeen moſt of his near friends and relations periſh in the field or on the ſcaffold, and who had been expoſed in his own perſon to many hardſhips and dangers, had imbibed a violent antipathy to the York party, which no time nor experience were ever able to efface. Inſtead of embracing the preſent happy opportunity of aboliſhing theſe fatal diſtinctions, of uniting his title with that of his ſpouſe, and of beſtowing favour indiſcriminately on the friends of both families; he carried into the throne all the partialities which belong to the head of a faction, and even the paſſions, which are carefully guarded againſt by every true politician in that ſituation. To exalt the Lancaſtrian party, to depreſs the retainers of the houſe of York, were ſtill the favourite objects of his purſuit; and thro' the whole courſe of his reign, he never forgot theſe early prepoſſeſſions. Incapable from his natural temper of a more enlarged and more benevolent ſyſtem of policy, he expoſed himſelf to many preſent inconveniencies, by too anxiouſly guarding againſt that future poſſible event, which might diſjoin his title from that of the princeſs whom he eſpouſed. And while he treated the Yorkiſts as enemies, he ſoon rendered them ſuch, and taught them to diſcuſs that right to the crown, which he ſo carefully kept ſeparate; and to perceive its weakneſs and invalidity.

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To theſe paſſions of Henry, as well as to his ſuſpicious politics, we are to aſcribe the meaſure, which he embraced two days after the battle of Boſworth. Edward Plantagenet, earl of Warwic, ſon to the unfortunate duke of Clarence, was detained in a kind of confinement at Sherif-Hutton in Yorkſhire by the jealouſy of his uncle, Richard; whoſe title to the throne was

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inferior to that of the young prince. Warwic had now reaſon to expect better treatment, as he was no obſtacle to the ſucceſſion either of Henry or Elizabeth; and from a boy of ſuch tender years no danger could reaſonably be apprehended. But Sir Robert Willoughby was diſpatched by Henry with orders to take him from Sherif-Hutton, to convey him to the Tower, and to retain him in cloſe cuſtody [d]. The ſame meſſenger carried directions, that the princeſs Elizabeth, who had been confined to the ſame place, ſhould be conducted to London, in order to meet Henry, and there celebrate her eſpouſals.

His joyful reception in London.

HENRY himſelf ſet out for the capital, and advanced by ſlow journies. Not to rouſe the jealouſy of the people, he took care to avoid all appearance of military triumph; and ſo to reſtrain the inſolence of victory, that every thing about him bore the appearance of an eſtabliſhed monarch, making a peaceable progreſs thro' his dominions, rather than of a prince who had opened a way to the throne by force of arms. The acclamations of the people were every where loud, and no leſs ſincere and hearty. Beſides that a young and victorious prince, on his acceſſion, was naturally the object of popularity; the nation promiſed themſelves great felicity from the new ſcene, which opened before them. During the courſe of near a whole century the kingdom had been laid waſte by domeſtic wars and convulſions; and if at any time the noiſe of arms had ceaſed, the ſound of faction and diſcontent ſtill threatened new diſorders. Henry, by his marriage with Elizabeth, ſeemed to enſure an union of the contending titles of the two families; and having prevailed over a hated tyrant, who had

[d] Bacon, p. 579. Polydore Virgil, p. 565.

anew disjointed the ſucceſſion even of the houſe of York, and filled his own family with blood and murder, an unfeigned favour was obſerved every where to attend him. Numerous and ſplendid troops of gentry and nobility accompanied his progreſs. The mayor and companies of London received him as he approached the city: The crouds of people and citizens were zealous in their expreſſions of ſatisfaction. But Henry, amidſt theſe general effuſions of joy, diſcovered ſtill the ſtatelineſs and reſerve of his temper, which made him ſcorn to court popularity: He entered London in a cloſe chariot, and would not gratify the people with a ſight of their new monarch. He went firſt to St. Paul's church, where he offered up the ſtandards, taken in the field of battle; and ſung oriſons for the victory, which he had there obtained. He departed thence to the biſhop of London's palace, where lodgings were prepared for him. CHAP. XXIV. 1485.

But Henry did not ſo much neglect the favour of the people, as to delay giving them aſſurance of his marriage with the princeſs Elizabeth, which he knew to be ſo paſſionately deſired by the whole nation. On his leaving Brittany, he had artfully dropt ſome hopes, that, if he ſhould ſucceed in his enterprize, and obtain the crown of England, he would eſpouſe Anne, the heireſs of that dutchy; and the report of this engagement had already reached England, and had begot anxiety in the people, and even in the princeſs Elizabeth herſelf. Henry took care to diſſipate theſe apprehenſions, by ſolemnly renewing, before the council and principal nobility, the promiſe, which he had already given, to celebrate his marriage with Elizabeth. But tho' bound by honour, as well as intereſt, to compleat this alliance, he was reſolved to poſtpone it, till the ceremony of his own coronation ſhould be finiſhed, and till his title ſhould be recognized

His coronation.

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1485.

inferior to that of the young prince. Warwic had now reaſon to expect better treatment, as he was no obſtacle to the ſucceſſion either of Henry or Elizabeth; and from a boy of ſuch tender years no danger could reaſonably be apprehended. But Sir Robert Willoughby was diſpatched by Henry with orders to take him from Sherif-Hutton, to convey him to the Tower, and to retain him in cloſe cuſtody [d]. The ſame meſſenger carried directions, that the princeſs Elizabeth, who had been confined to the ſame place, ſhould be conducted to London, in order to meet Henry, and there celebrate her eſpouſals.

His joyful reception in London.

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His coronation.

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1485. cognized by the parliament. Anxious ſtill to ſupport his perſonal and hereditary right to the throne, he dreaded leſt a preceding marriage with the princeſs ſhould imply a participation of ſovereignty in her, and raiſe doubts of his own title by the houſe of Lancaſter.

Sweating ſickneſs. THERE raged at that time in London, and other parts of the kingdom, a ſpecies of malady, unknown to any other age or nation, the Sweating ſickneſs, which occaſioned a ſudden death to great multitudes; tho' it was not propagated by any contagious infection, but aroſe from the general diſpoſition of the air and of the human body. In leſs than twenty-four hours the patient commonly died or recovered; but when the peſtilence had committed ravages for a few weeks, it was obſerved, either from alterations in the air, or from a more proper regimen, which had been diſcovered, to be conſiderably abated [e]. Preparations were then made for the ceremony of Henry's coronation. In order to heighten the ſplendor of that appearance, he beſtowed the rank of knights banneret on twelve perſons; and he conferred peerages on three. Jaſper earl of Pembroke, his uncle, he created duke of Bedford; Thomas lord Stanley, his father-in-law, earl of Derby; and Edward Courteney, earl of Devonſhire. At the coronation likewiſe there appeared a new inſtitution, which the King had eſtabliſhed for ſecurity as well as pomp, a band of fifty archers, who were denominated yeomen of the guard. But leſt the people ſhould take umbrage at this unuſual ſymptom of jealouſy in the prince, as if it implied a perſonal diffidence of his ſubjects, he declared the inſtitution to be perpetual. The ceremony of coronation was performed by cardinal Bourchier, archbiſhop of Canterbury.

30th of October.

[e] Polydore Virgil, p. 567.

THE

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1485. 7th of November. A parliament.

THE parliament being aſſembled at Weſtminſter, the majority immediately appeared to be devoted partizans of Henry; all perſons of another diſpoſition, either declining to ſtand in theſe dangerous times, or being obliged to diſſemble their principles and inclinations. The Lancaſtrian party had every where been ſucceſsful in the elections; and even many of them had been returned knights and burgeſſes, who, during the prevalence of the houſe of York, had been expoſed to the rigour of the law, and been condemned by ſentence of attainder or outlawry. Their right to take ſeats in the houſe being queſtioned, the caſe was referred to all the judges, who aſſembled in the Exchequer Chamber, in order to deliberate on ſo delicate a ſubject. The ſentence pronounced was very prudent, and contained a juſt temperament between law and expediency [f]. The judges determined, that the members attainted ſhould forbear taking their ſeats till an act were paſſed for the reverſal of their attainder. There was no difficulty of obtaining this act; and in it were comprehended an hundred and ſeven perſons of the King's party [g]!

BUT a difficulty was ſtarted of a nature ſtill more important. The King himſelf had been attainted; and his right of ſucceſſion to the crown might thence be expoſed to ſome doubt. The judges extricated themſelves from this dangerous queſtion, by a ſingular poſition, which they eſtabliſhed; "That the crown takes away "all defects and ſtops in blood; and that from the time "the King aſſumed royal authority, the fountain was "cleared, and all attainders and corruptions of blood "diſcharged [h]." Beſides that the caſe, from its urgent

[f] Bacon, p. 581.

[g] Rot. Parl. 1 Hen. VII. n. 2, 3, 4.—15. 17. 26—65.

[h] Bacon, p. 581.

neceſſity,

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neceſſity, admitted of no deliberation; the judges probably thought, that no ſentence of a court of judicature ought to bar the right of ſucceſſion; that the jealouſy of a King towards his heir might readily occaſion ſtretches of law and juſtice againſt him; and that a prince might even be engaged in unjuſtifiable meaſures during his predeceſſor's reign, without meriting on that account to be excluded from the throne, which was his birth-right.

WITH a parliament ſo obſequious as the preſent, the King could not fail to obtain whatever act of ſettlement he was pleaſed to require. He ſeems only to have entertained ſome doubts within himſelf on what title he ſhould found his pretenſions. In his firſt addreſs to the parliament he mentioned his juſt title by hereditary right: But leſt that title ſhould not be eſteemed ſufficient, he ſubjoined his claim by the judgment of God, who had given him victory over his enemies in the field of battle. And again, leſt this pretenſion ſhould be interpreted as aſſuming a right of conqueſt, he enſured to his ſubjects the entire enjoyment of their former properties and poſſeſſions.

Entail of the crown.

THE entail of the crown was drawn, according to the ſenſe of the King, and probably in the words, dictated by him. He made no mention in it of the princeſs Elizabeth, nor any branch of the family of York; but in other reſpects the act was compoſed with ſufficient reſerve and moderation. He did not inſiſt, that it ſhould contain a declaration or recognition of his preceding right; as on the other hand, he avoided the appearance of a new law or ordinance. He choſe a middle courſe, which, as is generally unavoidable in ſuch caſes, was not entirely free from uncertainty and obſcurity. It was voted, "That the inheritance of the crown ſhould reſt,

"remain,

"remain, and abide in the King[1];" but whether as rightful heir, or only as preſent poſſeſſor, was not determined. In like manner, the King was contented that the ſucceſſion ſhould be ſecured to the heirs of his body; but he pretended not, in caſe of their failure, to exclude the houſe of York, or give the preference to that of Lancaſter: He left that great point ambiguous for the preſent; and truſted, that, if ever its determination ſhould become requiſite, future incidents would open the way for the deciſion. CHAP. XXIV. 1485.

But after all theſe precautions, the King was ſo little ſatisfied with his own title to the crown, that, in the following year, he applied to Rome for a confirmation of it; and as that court gladly laid hold of all opportunities, which the imprudence, weakneſs, or neceſſities of princes afforded it to extend its authority, Innocent the eighth, the reigning pope, readily granted a bull, in whatever terms the King was pleaſed to deſire. All Henry's titles, by ſucceſſion, marriage, parliamentary choice, even conqueſt, are there enumerated; and to the whole the ſanction of religion is added; excommunication is denounced againſt every one who ſhould either diſturb him in the preſent poſſeſſion, or the heirs of his body in their future ſucceſſion to the crown; and from this penalty, no criminal, except in the article of death, can be abſolved but by the pope himſelf, or his ſpecial commiſſioners. It is difficult to imagine, that the ſecurity derived from this bull, could be a compenſation for the defect which it betrayed in Henry's title, and for the danger of thus inviting the pope to interpoſe in theſe concerns.

It was natural, and even laudable in Henry to reverſe the attainders, which had paſſed againſt the partizans of

[1] Bacon, p. 581.

the

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the houſe of Lancaſter: But the revenges, which he exerciſed againſt the retainers of the York family, to which he was ſo ſoon to be allied, cannot be conſidered in the ſame light. Yet the parliament, at his inſtigation, paſſed an act of attainder againſt the late King himſelf, againſt the duke of Norfolk, the earl of Surrey, viſcount Lovel, the lords Zouche and Ferrars of Chartley, Sir Walter and Sir James Harrington, Sir William Berkeley, Sir Humphrey Stafford, Cateſby, and about twenty other gentlemen, who had fought on Richard's ſide in the battle of Boſworth. How men could be guilty of treaſon, by ſupporting the King in poſſeſſion againſt the earl of Richmond, who aſſumed not the title of King, it was not eaſy to determine; and nothing but a ſervile complaiſance in the parliament could have engaged them to make this ſtretch of juſtice. Nor was it a ſmall mortification to the people in general, to find, that the King, prompted either by avarice or reſentment, could, in the very beginning of his reign, ſo far violate the cordial union, which had been previouſly concerted between the parties, and to the expectation of which he had plainly owed his ſucceſſion to the throne.

THE King, having gained ſo many points of conſequence from his parliament, thought it not expedient to demand any ſupply from them, which the profound peace enjoyed by the nation, and the late forfeitures of Richard's adherents, ſeemed to render ſomewhat ſuperfluous. The parliament, however, conferred on him during life
10th of December. the duty of tonnage and poundage, which had been enjoyed in the ſame manner by ſome of his immediate predeceſſors; and they added, before they broke up, other lucrative bills of no great moment. The King, on his part, made ſome returns of grace and favour to his people. He publiſhed his royal proclamation, offering

ing pardon to all ſuch as had taken arms, or formed any attempts againſt him; provided they ſubmitted themſelves to mercy by a certain day, and took the uſual oath of fealty and allegiance. Upon this proclamation many came out of their ſanctuaries, and the minds of men were every where much quieted. Henry choſe to take wholly to himſelf the merit of an act of grace, ſo agreeable to the nation; rather than communicate it with the parliament, (as was his firſt intention) by paſſing a bill to that purpoſe. The earl of Surrey, however, tho' he had ſubmitted, and delivered himſelf into the King's hands, was ſent priſoner to the Tower. CHAP. XXIV. 1485.

DURING this parliament, the King alſo beſtowed favours and honours on ſome particular perſons, who were attached to him. Edward Stafford, eldeſt ſon to the duke of Buckingham, forfeited in the late reign, was reſtored to all the honours of his family, as well as to all its fortune, which was very ample. This generoſity, ſo unuſual in Henry, was the effect of his gratitude to the memory of Buckingham, who had firſt concerted the plan of his ſucceſſion to the crown, and who by his own ruin had made way for that great event. Chandos of Brittany was created earl of Bath, Sir Giles Daubeny lord Daubeny, and Sir Robert Willoughby lord Broke. Theſe were all the titles of nobility conferred by the King [k].

BUT the miniſters, whom the King moſt truſted and favoured, were not choſen from among the nobility, or even from among the laity. John Morton, and Richard Fox, two clergymen, perſons of induſtry, vigilance, and capacity, were the men to whom he chiefly confided his affairs and ſecret councils. They had ſhared with

[k] Polydore Virgil, p. 566.

him

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1485. him all his former dangers and diſtreſſes; and he now took care to make them participate in his good fortune. They were both called to the privy council; and Morton was created biſhop of Ely, Fox of Exeter. The former ſoon after, upon the death of Bourchier, was raiſed to the ſee of Canterbury. The latter was made lord privy ſeal; and ſucceſſively, biſhop of Bath and Wells, Durham, and Wincheſter. For Henry, as lord Bacon obſerves, loved to employ and advance prelates, becauſe, having rich biſhoprics to beſtow, it was eaſy for him to reward their ſervices: And it was his maxim to raiſe them by ſlow ſteps, and make them firſt paſs thro' the inferior biſhoprics [1]. He probably expected, that as they were naturally more dependant on him than the nobility, who, during that age, enjoyed poſſeſſions and juriſdictions dangerous to royal authority; ſo the proſpect of ſome farther elevation would render them ſtill more active in his ſervice, and more obſequious to his commands.

1486. 18th of January. In preſenting the bill of tonnage and poundage, the parliament, anxious to preſerve the true and undiſputed ſucceſſion to the crown, had petitioned Henry, with demonſtrations of the greateſt earneſtneſs, to eſpouſe the princeſs Elizabeth; but they covered their real reaſon under the dutiful pretence of their deſire to have heirs of his body. He now thought in earneſt of ſatisfying the minds of his people in that particular. His marriage was celebrated at London; and that with greater appearance of univerſal joy, than either his firſt entry or his coronation. Henry remarked with much diſpleaſure this general favour which was borne the houſe of York. The ſuſpicions, which aroſe from it, not only diſturbed his

King's marriage.

[1] Bacon, p. 582.

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tranquillity during his whole reign; but bred diſguſt towards his ſpouſe herſelf, and poiſoned all his domeſtic enjoyments. Tho' virtuous, amiable, and obſequious to the laſt degree, ſhe never met with a proper return of affection, or even of complaiſance from her huſband; and the malignant ideas of faction ſtill, in his ſullen mind, prevailed over all the ſentiments of conjugal tenderneſs. CHAP. XXIV. 1486.

THE King had been carried along with ſuch a tide of ſucceſs ever ſince his arrival in England, that he thought nothing could withſtand the fortune, and authority which attended him. He now reſolved to make a progreſs into the North, where the friends of the houſe of York, and even the partizans of Richard, were moſt numerous; in hopes of curing, by his preſence and converſation, the prejudices of the malecontents. When he arrived at Nottingham, he heard that viſcount Lovel, with Sir Humphrey Stafford and Thomas, his brother, had withdrawn themſelves ſecretly from their ſanctuary at Colcheſter: But this news appeared not to him of ſuch importance as to ſtop his journey; and he proceeded forward to York. He there heard, that the Staffords had levied an army in the county of Worceſter, and were approaching to beſiege that city: And that Lovel, at the head of an army of three or four thouſand men, was marching to attack him in York. Henry was not diſmayed with this intelligence. His active courage, full of reſources, immediately prompted him to find the proper remedy. Tho' he knew himſelf to be ſurrounded with enemies in theſe diſaffected counties, he aſſembled a ſmall body of troops, in whom he could confide; and he put them under the command of the duke of Bedford. He joined to them all his own attendants; but he found that this haſty armament was more formidable by their An inſurrection.

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1486. ſpirit and their zealous attachment to him, than by the arms or military ſtores of which they were provided. He therefore gave Bedford orders not to approach the enemy; but previouſly to try every proper expedient to diſſipate them. Bedford publiſhed a general promiſe of pardon to the rebels, which had a greater effect on their leader than on his followers. Lovel, who had undertaken an enterprize, that exceeded his courage and capacity, was ſo terrified with the fears of deſertion among his troops, that he ſuddenly withdrew himſelf, and, after lurking ſome time in Lancaſhire, he made his eſcape into Flanders, where he was protected by the dutcheſs of Burgundy. His army ſubmitted to the King's clemency; and the other rebels, hearing of this ſucceſs, raiſed the ſiege of Worceſter, and diſperſed themſelves. The Staffords took ſanctuary in the church of Colnham, a village near Abingdon; but as it was found, that that church had not the privilege of giving protection to rebels, they were taken thence: The eldeſt Stafford was executed at Tyburn; the younger, pleading that he was miſled by his brother, obtained a pardon [a].

20th of September. HENRY's joy for this ſucceſs was followed, ſome time after, by the birth of a prince, to whom he gave the name of Arthur, in memory of the famous Britiſh King of that name, from whom, it was pretended, the family of Tudor derived their deſcent.

Diſcontents of the people. THO' Henry had been able to diſſipate that haſty rebellion, which was raiſed by the relicts of Richard's partizans, his government was become in general very unpopular: The ſource of the public diſcontent aroſe chiefly from his prejudice againſt the houſe of York, which was univerſally beloved by the nation, and which, for that

[a] Polydore Virgil, p. 569.

very reaſon, became every day more the object of his hatred and jealouſy. Not only a preference on all occaſions, it was obſerved, was given to the Lancaſtrians; but many of the oppoſite party had been expoſed to great ſeverity, and had been bereaved of their fortunes by acts of attainder. A general reſumption likewiſe had paſſed of all grants made by the princes of the houſe of York; and tho' this rigour had been covered under the pretence, that the revenue was become inſufficient to ſupport the crown, and tho' the liberalities, granted during the latter years of Henry the ſixth, were reſumed by the ſame law, yet the York-party, as they were the principal ſufferers by the reſumption, thought it chiefly levelled againſt them. The ſeverity, exerciſed againſt the earl of Warwic, begot compaſſion towards youth and innocence, expoſed to ſuch oppreſſion; and his confinement in the Tower, the very place where Edward's children had been murdered by their uncle, made the public expect a like cataſtrophe for him, and led them to make a compariſon between Henry and that deteſted tyrant. And when it was remarked, that the Queen herſelf met with harſh treatment, and even after the birth of a ſon, was not admitted to the honour of a public coronation, Henry's prepoſſeſſions were then concluded to be abſolutely incurable, and men became equally obſtinate in their diſguſt againſt his government. Nor was the manner and addreſs of the King calculated to cure theſe prejudices contracted againſt his adminiſtration; but had, in every thing, a tendency to promote fear, or at beſt reverence, rather than good-will and affection [b]. And while the high idea, entertained of his policy and vigour, retained the nobility and men of character in obedience; the effects of his unpopular government ſoon appeared

CHAP. XXIV. 1486.

[b] Bacon, p. 583.

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in the public, by incidents of a very extraordinary nature.

1486. THERE lived in Oxford, one Richard Simon, a prieſt, who poſſeſſed ſome ſubtlety, and ſtill more boldneſs and temerity. This man had entertained the deſign of diſturbing Henry's government, by raiſing up a pretender to his crown; and for that purpoſe, he caſt his eyes on Lambert Simnel, a youth of fifteen years of age, who was ſon of a baker, and who, being endowed with underſtanding above his years, and addreſs above his condition, ſeemed well fitted to perſonate a prince of royal extraction. A report had been ſpread among the people, and received with great avidity, that Richard, duke of York, ſecond ſon to Edward the fourth, had, by a ſecret eſcape, ſaved himſelf from his uncle's cruelty, and lay ſomewhere concealed in England. Simon, taking advantage of this rumour, had at firſt inſtructed his pupil to aſſume that name, which he found to be ſo fondly cheriſhed by the public: But hearing afterwards a new report, that Warwic had made his eſcape from the Tower, and obſerving that this news was attended with no leſs general ſatisfaction, he changed the plan of his impoſture, and made Simnel perſonate that unfortunate prince [c]. Tho' the youth was qualified by nature for the part which he was inſtructed to act; yet was it remarked, that he was better informed in circumſtances relating to the royal family, and particularly in the adventures of the earl of Warwic, than he could be ſuppoſed to have learned from one of Simon's condition: And it was thence conjectured, that perſons of higher rank, partizans of the houſe of York, had laid the plan of this conſpiracy, and had conveyed proper inſtructions to the actors. The Queen dowager herſelf was expoſed to

Lambert Simnel.

[c] Polydore Virgil, p. 569, 570.

great

great ſuſpicion; and it was indeed the general opinion, however unlikely it might ſeem, that ſhe had ſecretly given her conſent to this impoſture. This woman was of a very reſtleſs diſpoſition. That character of ambition and intrigue, which ſhe had betrayed during the reign of her huſband, had not abandoned her during the uſurpation of Richard; and in her cloſet was firſt laid the plan of the great confederacy, which overturned the throne of the tyrant, and raiſed the earl of Richmond to royal dignity. Finding, that, inſtead of receiving the reward of theſe ſervices, ſhe herſelf was fallen into abſolute inſignificance, her daughter treated with ſeverity, and all her friends brought under ſubjection, ſhe had conceived the moſt violent animoſity againſt Henry, and had reſolved to make him feel the effects of her reſentment. The impoſtor, ſhe knew, however ſucceſsful, might eaſily at laſt be ſet aſide; and if a way could be found at his riſque to ſubvert the King's government, ſhe hoped that a ſcene would be opened, which, tho' difficult at preſent exactly to foreſee, would gratify her revenge, and be on the whole leſs irkſome to her, than that ſlavery and contempt, to which ſhe was reduced [d].

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But whatever care Simon might take to convey inſtruction to his pupil, Simnel, he knew, that the impoſture would not bear a cloſe inſpection; and he was therefore determined to open the firſt public ſcene of it in Ireland. That iſland, which was zealouſly attached to the houſe of York, and bore an affectionate regard to the memory of Clarence, Warwic's father, who had been their lieutenant, was improvidently allowed by Henry to remain in the ſame condition, in which he found it; and all the counſellors and officers, who had been ap-

[d] Polydore Virgil, p. 570.

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pointed by his predeceſſor, ſtill retained their authority. No ſooner did Simnel preſent himſelf to Thomas Fitzgerald, earl of Kildare, the deputy, and claim his protection as the unfortunate Warwic, than that credulous nobleman, not ſuſpecting ſo bold a fiction, lent attenſion to him, and began to conſult ſome perſons of rank with regard to this extraordinary incident. Theſe he found even more ſanguine in their zeal and belief than himſelf: And in proportion as the ſtory diffuſed itſelf among thoſe of lower condition, it became the object of ſtill higher paſſion and credulity; till the people in Dublin with one conſent tendered their allegiance to Simnel, as to the true Plantagenet. Fond of a novelty, which flattered their natural propenſion, they overlooked the daughters of Edward the fourth, who ſtood before Warwic in the order of ſucceſſion; they payed the pretended prince attendance as their ſovereign, lodged him in the caſtle of Dublin, crowned him with a diadem taken from a ſtatue of the virgin, and publicly proclaimed him King, under the appellation of Edward the ſixth. The whole iſland followed the example of the capital; and not a ſword was any where drawn in Henry's quarrel.

Revolt of Ireland.

WHEN this intelligence was conveyed to Henry, it reduced him to ſome perplexity. Determined always to face his enemies in perſon, he yet ſcrupled at preſent to leave England, where he ſuſpected the conſpiracy was firſt framed, and where, he knew, many perſons of condition, and the people in general were much diſpoſed to give it countenance. In order to diſcover the ſecret ſource of the contrivance, and take meaſures againſt this open revolt, he held frequent conſultations with his miniſters and counſellors, and laid plans for a vigorous defence of his authority, and the ſuppreſſion of his enemies.

THE

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THE firſt event, which followed theſe deliberations, gave great ſurprize to the public: It was the ſeizure of the Queen dowager, the forfeiture of all her lands and revenue, and the cloſe confinement of her perſon in the nunnery of Bermondeſey. So arbitrary and violent an act of authority was covered with a very thin pretence. It was alleged, that, notwithſtanding the ſecret agreement to marry her daughter to Henry, ſhe had yet yielded to the ſolicitations and menaces of Richard, and delivered that princeſs and her ſiſters into the hands of the tyrant. This crime, which was now become obſolete, and might admit of alleviations, was therefore ſuſpected not to be the real cauſe of the ſeverity, with which ſhe was treated; and men believed, that the King, unwilling to accuſe ſo near a relation of a conſpiracy againſt him, had cloaked his vengeance or precaution under the pretext of an offence, known to the whole world [e]. They were afterwards the more confirmed in this ſuſpicion, when they found, that the unfortunate Queen, tho' ſhe ſurvived this diſgrace ſeveral years, was never treated with any more lenity, but was allowed to end her life in poverty, ſolitude, and confinement.

THE next meaſure of the King was of a leſs exceptionable nature. He ordered that Warwic ſhould be taken from the Tower, be led in proceſſion through the ſtreets of London, be conducted to St. Paul's, and there expoſed to the eyes of the whole people. He even gave directions, that ſome perſons of condition, who were attached to the houſe of York, and were beſt acquainted with the perſon of this prince, ſhould approach him and converſe with him: And he truſted, that theſe, being convinced of the abſurd impoſture of Simnel, would

[e] Bacon, p. 583. Polydore Virgil, p. 571.

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put a ſtop to the credulity of the people. The expedient had its effect in England: But in Ireland the people ſtill perſiſted in their revolt, and zealouſly retorted on the King the reproach of propagating an impoſture, and of having ſhewn a counterfeit Warwic to the people.

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HENRY had ſoon reaſon to apprehend, that the deſign againſt him was not laid on ſuch ſlight foundations as the abſurdity of the contrivance ſeemed to promiſe. John earl of Lincoln, ſon of John de la Pole, duke of Suffolk, and of Elizabeth, eldeſt ſiſter to Edward the fourth, was engaged to take part in the conſpiracy. This nobleman, who poſſeſt capacity and courage, had entertained very aſpiring views; and his ambition was encouraged by the known intentions of his uncle, Richard, who had formed a deſign, in caſe himſelf ſhould die without iſſue, of declaring Lincoln ſucceſſor to the crown. The King's jealouſy againſt all eminent perſons of the York-party, and his rigour towards Warwic, had farther ſtruck Lincoln with apprehenſions, and made him reſolve to ſeek for ſafety in the moſt dangerous councils. Having fixed a ſecret correſpondence with Sir Thomas Broughton, a man of great intereſt in Lancaſhire, he ſet out for Flanders, where Lovel had arrived a little before him; and he lived, during ſome time, in the court of his aunt, the dutcheſs of Burgundy, by whom he had been invited over.

Intrigues of the dutcheſs of Burgundy.

MARGARET, widow of Charles the Bold, duke of Burgundy, having born no children to her huſband, attached herſelf with an entire friendſhip to her daughter-in-law, married to Maximilian, archduke of Auſtria; and after the death of that princeſs, ſhe perſevered in her affection to Philip and Margaret, her children, and occupied herſelf in the care of their education and of their perſons. By her virtuous conduct and demeanor, ſhe had

had acquired great authority among the Flemings; and lived with much dignity, as well as œconomy, upon that ample dowry, which ſhe inherited from her huſband. The reſentments of this princeſs were no leſs warm than her friendſhips; and that ſpirit of faction, which it is ſo difficult for a ſocial and ſanguine temper to guard againſt, had taken ſtrong poſſeſſion of her heart, and entrenched ſomewhat on the probity, which ſhone forth in other parts of her character. Hearing of the malignant jealouſy, entertained by Henry againſt her family, and his oppreſſion of all its partizans; ſhe was moved with the higheſt indignation, and ſhe determined to make him repent of that enmity, of which ſo many of her friends, without any reaſon or neceſſity, had fallen the victims. After conſulting with Lincoln and Lovel, ſhe hired a body of two thouſand veteran Germans, under the command of Martin Swart, a brave and experienced officer [a]; and ſent them over, together with theſe two noblemen, to join Simnel in Ireland. The countenance, given by perſons of ſuch high condition, and the acceſſion of this military force, raiſed extremely the courage of the Iriſh, and made them entertain the reſolution of invading England, where they believed the ſpirit of diſaffection to prevail as much as it had appeared to do in Ireland. The poverty alſo, under which they laboured, made it impoſſible for them to maintain any longer their new court and army, and inſpired them with a ſtrong deſire of enriching themſelves by plunder and preferment in England.

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Lambert Simnel invades England.

HENRY was not ignorant of theſe intentions of his enemies; and he prepared himſelf for reſiſtance. He ordered troops to be muſtered in different parts of the king-

[a] Polydore Virgil, p. 572, 573.

dom,

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dom, and put them under the command of the duke of Bedford, and the earl of Oxford. He confined from jealouſy the marquis of Dorſet, who, he ſuſpected, would revenge the injuries ſuffered by his mother, the Queen dowager: And to gratify the people by an appearance of devotion, he made a pilgrimage to our lady of Walſingham, famous for miracles; and there offered up prayers for ſucceſs and for deliverance from his enemies.

BEING informed that Simnel and his forces were landed at Foudrey in Lancaſhire, he drew together his own troops, and advanced towards them as far as Coventry. The rebels had entertained hopes, that the diſaffected counties in the North would riſe in their favour: But the people, averſe to join Iriſh and German invaders, convinced of Lambert's impoſture, and kept in awe by the King's reputation for ſucceſs and conduct, either remained in tranquillity, or gave all aſſiſtance to the royal army. The earl of Lincoln, therefore, who commanded the rebels, finding no hopes but in ſpeedy victory, was determined to bring the matter to a deciſion; and the King, ſupported by the native courage of his temper, and emboldened by a great acceſſion of volunteers, which had joined him, under the earl of Shrewſbury and lord Strange, declined not the combat. The oppoſite armies met at Stoke in the county of Notingham, and fought a battle, which was more bloody and more obſtinately diſputed than could have been expected from the inequality of their force. All the leaders of the rebels were reſolved to conquer or to die, and they inſpired their troops with a like reſolution. The Germans alſo, being veteran and experienced ſoldiers, kept the victory long doubtful; and even the Iriſh, tho' ill-armed and almoſt defenceleſs, ſhowed themſelves not defective in ſpirit and bravery. The King's victory was purchaſed with

6th of June. Battle of Stoke.

with loſs, but was entirely deciſive. Lincoln, Broughton and Swart periſhed in the field of battle, with four thouſand of their troops. As Lovel was never more heard of, he was believed to have undergone the ſame fate. Simnel with his tutor, Simon, was taken priſoner. Simon, being a prieſt, was not tried at law, and was only committed to cloſe cuſtody: Simnel was too contemptible either to excite apprehenſion or reſentment in Henry. He was pardoned, and made a ſcullion in the King's kitchen; whence he was afterwards advanced to the rank of a falconer [b]. CHAP. XXIV. 1487.

HENRY had now leiſure to revenge himſelf of his enemies. He made a progreſs into the northern parts, where he gave many proofs of the rigours of his juſtice. A ſtrict enquiry was made after thoſe who had aſſiſted or favoured the rebels. The puniſhments were not all ſanguinary. The King made his revenge ſubſervient to his avarice. Heavy fines were levied upon the delinquents. In giving ſentence, the proceedings of the courts, and even the courts themſelves, were entirely arbitrary. Either the criminals were tried by commiſſioners appointed for that purpoſe, or they ſuffered puniſhment by ſentence of a court-martial. And as a rumour had prevailed before the battle of Stoke, that the rebels had gained the victory, that the King's army was cut in pieces, and that the King himſelf had eſcaped by flight, Henry was reſolved to interpret the belief or propagation of this report as a mark of diſaffection; and he puniſhed many for that pretended crime. But ſuch, in this age, was the ſituation of the Engliſh government, that the royal prerogative, which was but imperfectly reſtrained during the moſt peaceable periods, was ſure,

[b] Bacon, p. 586. Pol. Virg. p. 574.

in

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1487. in tumultuous, or even ſuſpicious times, which frequently occurred, to break all bounds of law and order.

AFTER the King had ſatisfied his rigour by the puniſhment of his enemies, he reſolved to give contentment to the people, in a point, which, tho' a mere ceremony, was very paſſionately deſired by them. The Queen had been married near two years, but had not yet been crowned; and this affectation of delay had given great diſcontent to the public, and had been one principal ſource of the diſaffection which prevailed. The King, inſtructed by experience, now finiſhed the ceremony of her coronation; and to ſhew a ſtill more gracious diſpoſition, he gave liberty to her half-brother, the marquis of Dorſet, who had been able to clear himſelf of all the crimes of which he was accuſed.

25th of November.

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State of foreign affairs——State of Scotland——of Spain——of the Low Countries——of France——of Britanny——French invaſion of Britanny——French embaſſy to England——Diſſimulation of the French court——An inſurrection in the North——ſuppreſſed——King ſends forces into Britanny——Annexation of Britanny to France——A parliament——War with France——Invaſion of France——Peace with France——Perkin Warbec——His impoſture——He is avowed by the dutcheſs of Burgundy——and by many of the Engliſh nobility——Trial and execution of Stanley——A parliament.

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THE King acquired great reputation throughout all Europe by the proſperous and vigorous conduct of his domeſtic affairs; and as ſome incidents, about this time, invited him to look abroad, and exert himſelf in behalf of his allies, it will be neceſſary, in order to give a juſt account of his foreign meaſures, to explain the condition of the neighbouring kingdoms; beginning with Scotland, which lies moſt contiguous.

State of foreign affairs.

THE kingdom of Scotland had not as yet attained that ſtate, which diſtinguiſhes a civilized monarchy, and which enables the government, by the force of its laws and inſtitutions alone, without any extraordinary capacity in the ſovereign, to maintain itſelf in order and tranquillity. James the Third, who now filled the

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throne, was a prince of little induſtry and of a narrow genius; and tho' it behoved him to yield the reins of government to his miniſters, he had never been able to make any choice, which could give contentment both to himſelf and to his people. When he beſtowed his confidence on any of the principal nobility, he found, that they exalted their own family to ſuch a height, as was dangerous to the prince, and gave umbrage to the ſtate: When he conferred favour on any perſon of meaner birth, on whoſe ſubmiſſion he could more depend, the barons of his kingdom, enraged at the power of an upſtart minion, proceeded to the utmoſt extremities againſt their ſovereign. Had Henry entertained the ambition of conqueſts, a tempting opportunity now offered of reducing that kingdom to ſubjection; but as he was probably ſenſible, that a warlike people, tho' they might be over-run by reaſon of their domeſtic diviſions, could not be retained in obedience without a regular military force, which was then unknown in England, he rather propoſed the renewal of the peace with Scotland, and ſent an embaſſy to James for that purpoſe. But the Scots, who never deſired a long peace with England, and who thought that their ſecurity conſiſted in preſerving themſelves conſtantly in a warlike poſture, would not agree to more than a ſeven years truce, which was accordingly concluded [c].

State of Spain.

THE European ſtates on the continent were then haſtening faſt to that ſituation, in which they have remained, without any material alterations, for near three centuries; and began to unite themſelves into one extenſive ſyſtem of policy, which comprehended the chief powers of Chriſtendom. Spain, which had hitherto been almoſt entirely occupied within herſelf, now be-

[c] Polyd. Virg. p. 575.

came

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came formidable by the union of Arragon and Caſtile, in the perſons of Ferdinand and Iſabella, who, being princes of great capacity, employed their force in enterprizes the moſt advantageous to their combined monarchy. The conqueſt of Granada from the Moors was then undertaken, and brought near to a happy concluſion. And in that expedition the military genius of Spain was revived; honour and ſecurity were attained; and her princes, no longer held in fear by a domeſtic enemy ſo dangerous, began to enter into all the tranſactions of Europe, and make a great figure in every war and negotiation.

Of the Low Countries.

MAXIMILIAN, King of the Romans, ſon to the emperor Frederic, had, by his marriage with the heireſs of the houſe of Burgundy, acquired an intereſt in the Low Country provinces; and tho' the death of his ſpouſe had weakened his connection with that territory, he ſtill pretended to the government as tutor to his ſon Philip, and his authority had been acknowledged by Brabant, Holland, and ſeveral of the provinces. But as Flanders and Hainault ſtill refuſed to ſubmit to his regency, and even appointed other tutors to Philip, he had been engaged in long wars againſt that obſtinate people, and never was able thoroughly to ſubdue their ſpirit. That he might free himſelf from the oppoſition of France, he had concluded a peace with Lewis the Eleventh, and had given his daughter Margaret, then an infant, in marriage to the Dauphin; together with Artois, Franche-Compté, and Charolois as her dowry. But this alliance had not produced the deſired effect. The Dauphin ſucceeded to the crown of France under the appellation of Charles the Eighth; but Maximilian ſtill found the mutinies of the Flemings fomented by the intrigues of the court of France.

Charles the Bold ſeized the Dutchy of Burgundy, County of Flanders, and Artois. After his death Lewis the Eleventh ſeized upon Burgundy, Artois, and ſeveral other Conſtituents which had belonged to him. See Guicciardini I.

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State of France.

FRANCE, during the two preceding reigns, had made a mighty encreaſe in power and greatneſs; and had not other ſtates of Europe at the ſame time received an acceſſion of force, it had been impoſſible to have retained her within her antient boundaries. Moſt of the great fiefs, Normandy, Champagne, Anjou, Dauphiny, Guienne, Provence, and Burgundy had been united to the crown; the Engliſh had been expelled from all their conqueſts; the authority of the prince had been raiſed to ſuch a condition as enabled him to maintain law and order; a conſiderable military force was kept on foot, and the finances were able to ſupport them. Lewis the Eleventh indeed, from whom many of theſe advantages were derived, was dead, and had left his ſon, in very early youth and ill educated, to ſuſtain the weight of the monarchy: But having entruſted the government to his daughter, Anne, Lady of Beaujeu, a woman of ſpirit and capacity, the French power ſuffered no check or decline. On the contrary, this princeſs formed the great project, which at laſt ſhe happily effected, of uniting to the crown Britanny, the laſt and moſt independent fief of the monarchy.

Of Britanny.

FRANCIS the Second, duke of Britanny, was a good, but a weak prince, who, conſcious of his own unfitneſs for government, had reſigned himſelf entirely to the direction of Peter Landais, a man of very mean birth, more remarkable for his ability than for his virtue or integrity. The nobles of Britanny, diſpleaſed with the great advancement of this favourite, had even proceeded to diſaffection againſt their ſovereign; and after many tumults and conſpiracies, they at laſt united among themſelves, and in a violent manner, ſeized, tried, and put to death the obnoxious miniſter. Fearing the reſentment of the prince for this invaſion of his authority,

many

many of them retired to France; and others, for their protection and ſafety, maintained a correſpondence with that court. The French miniſtry, obſerving the great diſſentions among the Bretons, thought the opportunity favourable for invading that dutchy; and ſo much the rather as they could cover their ambition under the ſpecious pretence of providing for domeſtic ſecurity. CHAP. XXV. 1488.

LEWIS, duke of Orleans, firſt prince of the blood, and preſumptive heir of the monarchy, had diſputed the adminiſtration with the lady of Beaujeu; and tho' his pretenſions had been rejected by the ſtates, he ſtill maintained cabals with many of the grandees, and laid ſchemes for ſubverting the authority of that princeſs. Finding his conſpiracies detected, he took arms, and fortified himſelf in Beaugenci; but as his revolt was precipitate, before his confederates were ready to riſe with him, he had been obliged to ſubmit, and to receive whatever conditions the French miniſtry were pleaſed to impoſe upon him. Actuated however by his ambition, and even by his fears, he ſoon retired out of France, and took ſhelter with the duke of Britanny, who was deſirous of ſtrengthening himſelf againſt the deſigns of the lady of Beaujeu by the friendſhip and credit of the duke of Orleans. This prince alſo, obſerving the aſcendant which he ſoon acquired over the duke of Britanny, had engaged many of his partizans to join him at that court, and had formed the deſign of aggrandizing himſelf by a marriage with Anne, the heireſs of that opulent dutchy.

THE barons of Britanny, who ſaw all favour engroſſed by the duke of Orleans and his train, renewed a ſtricter correſpondence with France, and even invited the French King to make an invaſion on their country. Deſirous

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however to preſerve its independancy, they had regulated the number of ſuccours, which France was to ſend them, and had ſtipulated that no fortified place in Britanny ſhould remain in the poſſeſſion of that monarchy. A vain precaution, where revolted ſubjects treat with a power ſo much ſuperior! The French invaded Britanny with forces three times more numerous than thoſe which they had promiſed to the barons; and advancing into the heart of the country, laid ſiege to Ploermel. To oppoſe them, the duke raiſed a numerous, but ill-diſciplined army, which he put under the command of the duke of Orleans, the count of Dunois, and others of the French nobility. The army, diſcontented with this choice, and jealous of their confederates, ſoon diſbanded, and left their prince with too ſmall a force to keep the field againſt his invaders. He retired to Vannes; but being hotly purſued by the French, who had made themſelves maſters of Ploermel, he eſcaped to Nantz; and the enemy, having taken and garriſoned Vannes, Dinant, and other places, laid cloſe ſiege to that city. The barons of Britanny, finding their country menaced with total ſubjection, began gradually to withdraw from the French army, and to make peace with their ſovereign.

French invaſion of Britanny.

THIS deſertion, however, of the Bretons diſcouraged not the court of France from purſuing her favourite project of reducing Britanny to ſubjection. The ſituation of Europe appeared very favourable to the execution of this deſign. Maximilian was engaged in cloſe alliance with the duke of Britanny, and had even opened a treaty for marrying his daughter; but he was on all occaſions ſo neceſſitous of money, and at that time ſo diſquieted by the mutinies of the Flemings, that little effectual

effectual assistance could be expected from him. Ferdinand was entirely occupied in the conquest of Granada; and it was also known, that if France resigned to him Rousillon and Cerdagne, to which he had pretensions, she could at any time engage him to abandon the interests of Britanny. England alone was both enabled by her power, and engaged by her interests, to support the independency of that dutchy; and the most dangerous opposition was therefore, by the French, expected from that quarter. In order to cover their real designs, no sooner were they informed of Henry's success against Simnel and his partizans, than they dispatched ambassadors to the court of London, and made professions of the utmost trust and confidence in that monarch. CHAP. XXV. 1488.

French embassy to England.

THE ambassadors, after congratulating Henry on the late victory, and communicating to him in the most cordial manner, as to an intimate friend, some successes of their master against Maximilian, came in the progress of their discourse to mention the late transactions in Britanny. They told him that the duke of Britanny having given protection to French fugitives and rebels, the King had been necessitated, contrary to his intention and inclination, to carry war into that dutchy: That the honour of the crown was interested not to suffer a vassal so far to forget his duty to his liege lord; nor was the security of the government of France less concerned to prevent the consequences of this dangerous temerity: That the fugitives were no mean nor obscure persons; but, among others, the duke of Orleans, first prince of the blood, who, finding himself obnoxious to justice for treasonable practices in France, had fled into Britanny; where he still persevered in laying schemes of rebellion against his sovereign: That the war being thus, on the

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1488. part of the French monarch, entirely defenſive, it would immediately ceaſe, when the duke of Britanny, by returning to his duty, ſhould remove the cauſes of it: That their maſter was ſenſible of the obligations which that duke, in very critical times, had conferred on Henry; but it was known alſo, that in times ſtill more critical, he or his mercenary counſellors had deſerted him, and put his life in the utmoſt hazard: That his ſole refuge in ſuch deſperate extremities had been the court of France, which not only protected his perſon, but ſupplied him with men and money, with which, aided by his own valour and conduct, he had been enabled to mount the throne of England: That France, in this tranſaction, had, from friendſhip to Henry, acted contrary to what, in a narrow view, might be eſteemed her own intereſt; ſince, inſtead of an odious tyrant, ſhe had contributed to eſtabliſh on a rival throne a prince endowed with ſuch virtue and ability: And that as both the juſtice of the cauſe and the obligations conferred on Henry thus preponderated on the ſide of France, their maſter expected, that, if the ſituation of Henry's affairs allowed him not to give aſſiſtance to that kingdom, he would at leaſt preſerve a neutrality between the contending parties [c].

THIS diſcourſe of the French ambaſſadors was plauſible; and to give it greater weight, they communicated to Henry, as in confidence, their maſter's intention, after he ſhould have compoſed the differences with Britanny, to lead an army into Italy, and make good his pretenſions to the kingdom of Naples: A project, which, they knew, would give no umbrage to the court of Eng-

[c] Bacon, p. 589.

land.

land. But all theſe artifices were in vain employed againſt the penetration of the King. He clearly ſaw, that France had entertained the view of ſubduing Britanny; but he alſo perceived, that ſhe would meet with great, and, as he thought, inſuperable difficulties in the execution of her project. The native force of that dutchy, he knew, had always been conſiderable, and had often, without any foreign aſſiſtance, reſiſted the power of France; the natural temper of the French nation, he imagined, would make them eaſily abandon every enterprize, which required perſeverance; and as the heir of the crown was confederated with the duke of Britanny, the courtiers would be ſtill more remiſs in proſecuting a ſcheme which muſt draw on them his reſentment and diſpleaſure. Should even theſe internal obſtructions be removed, Maximilian, whoſe enmity to France was well known, and who now paid his addreſſes to the heireſs of Britanny, would be able to make a diverſion on the ſide of Flanders; nor could it be expected that France, if ſhe proſecuted ſuch ambitious projects, would be allowed to remain in tranquillity by Ferdinand and Iſabella. Above all, he thought, the French court could never expect, that England, ſo deeply intereſted to preſerve the independancy of Britanny, ſo able by her power and ſituation to give effectual and prompt aſſiſtance, would permit ſuch an acceſſion of force to her rival. He imagined, therefore, that the miniſters of France, convinced of the impracticability of their ſchemes, would at laſt embrace pacific views, and would abandon an enterprize, ſo obnoxious to all the potentates of Europe.

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THIS reaſoning of Henry was ſolid, and might very juſtly engage him in dilatory and cautious meaſures:

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But there entered into his conduct another motive, which was apt to draw him beyond the juſt bounds, becauſe founded on a ruling paſſion. His frugality, which by degrees degenerated into avarice, made him averſe to all warlike enterprizes and diſtant expeditions; and engaged him previouſly to try the expedient of negotiation. He diſpatched Urſwic, his almoner, a man of addreſs and ability, to make offer of his mediation to the contending parties: An offer, which, he thought, if accepted by France, would ſoon lead to a compoſure of all differences; if refuſed or eluded, would at leaſt diſcover the perſeverance of that court in their ambitious projects. Urſwic found the lady of Beaujeu, now dutcheſs of Bourbon, engaged in the ſiege of Nantz, and had the ſatisfaction to find that his maſter's mediation was very readily embraced, and with many expreſſions of confidence and moderation. That able princeſs concluded, that the duke of Orleans, who governed the court of Britanny, foreſeeing that every accommodation muſt be made at his expence, would uſe all his intereſt to have Henry's propoſal rejected; and would by that means make an effectual apology for the French meaſures, and draw on the Bretons the reproach of obſtinacy and injuſtice. The event juſtified her prudence. When the Engliſh ambaſſador made the ſame applications to the duke of Britanny, he received for anſwer, in the name of that prince, that having ſo long acted the part of protector and guardian to Henry, during his youth and adverſity, he had expected, from a monarch of ſuch virtue, more effectual aſſiſtance, in his preſent diſtreſſes, than a barren offer of mediation, which ſuſpended not the progreſs of the French arms: That if Henry's gratitude was not ſufficient to engage him in ſuch a meaſure, his prudence, as King of England, ſhould diſcover to him the

Diſſimulation of the French court.

the pernicious conſequences attending the conqueſt of Brittany, and its annexation to the crown of France: That that kingdom, already become too powerful, would be enabled, by ſo great an acceſſion of force, to diſplay, to the ruin of England, that hoſtile diſpoſition, which had always ſubſiſted between thoſe rival nations: That Brittany, ſo uſeful an ally, which, by its ſituation, gave the Engliſh an entrance into the heart of France; being annexed to that kingdom, would be equally enabled from its ſituation to diſturb, either by pyracies or naval armaments, the commerce and peace of England: And that if the duke refuſed Henry's mediation, it proceeded neither from an inclination to a war, which he experienced to be ſo ruinous to him, nor from a confidence in his own force, which he knew to be ſo much inferior to that of the enemy; but merely from a ſenſe of his preſent neceſſity, which muſt engage the King to act the part of his confederate, not of a mediator. CHAP. XXV. 1488.

When this anſwer was reported to the King, he abandoned not the ſyſtem of conduct which he had formed: He only concluded, that ſome more time was requiſite to quell the obſtinacy of the Bretons and make them ſubmit to reaſon. And when he learned, that the people of Brittany, anxious for their duke's ſafety, had formed a tumultuary army of 60,000 men, and had obliged the French to raiſe the ſiege of Nantz, he fortified himſelf the more in his opinion, that the court of France would at laſt be reduced, by multiplied obſtacles and difficulties, to abandon the project of reducing Brittany to ſubjection. He continued therefore the ſcheme of negotiation, and thereby expoſed himſelf to be deceived by the artifices of the French miniſtry; who, ſtill pretending pacific intentions, ſent lord Bernard Daubigni, a Scots man of quality, to London, and preſſed Henry not

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1488. to be discouraged in offering his mediation to the court of Brittany. The King on his part dispatched another embassy composed of Urswic, the abbot of Abingdon, and Sir Richard Tonstal, who carried new proposals for an amicable accommodation. No effectual succours, meanwhile, were provided for the distressed Bretons. The lord Woodville, brother to the Queen dowager, a man of courage and enterprize, having asked leave to raise underhand a body of volunteers and transport them into Brittany, met with a refusal from the King, who was desirous of preserving the appearance of a strict neutrality. That nobleman, however, still persisted in his intentions. He went over to the Isle of Wight, of which he was governor; levied a body of 400 men; and having at last obtained, as is supposed, the secret permission of Henry, sailed with them to Brittany. This enterprize proved fatal to the leader, and brought small relief to the unhappy duke. The Bretons rashly engaged in a general action with the French at St. Aubin, and were totally discomfited. Woodville and all the English were put to the sword; together with a body of Bretons, who had been accoutered in the garb of Englishmen, in order to strike a greater terror into the French, to whom the martial prowess of that nation was always formidable [d]. The duke of Orleans, the prince of Orange, and many other persons of rank were taken prisoners: And the military force of Brittany was totally dissipated. The death of the duke, which followed soon after, threw affairs into still greater confusion, and seemed to threaten the state with a final subjection.

28th July.

9th September.

THO' the King prepared not against these events, so hurtful to the interest of England, with sufficient vigour

[d] Argentré Hist. de Bretagne, liv. xii.

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and precaution, he had not altogether overlooked them. Determined to maintain a pacific conduct, as far as the ſituation of affairs would permit, he yet knew the warlike diſpoſition of his ſubjects, and obſerved, that their antient and inveterate animoſity to France was now revived by the proſpect of this great acceſſion to its power and grandeur. He reſolved therefore to make advantage of thoſe humours, and to draw ſome ſupplies of money from the people, on pretence of giving aſſiſtance to the duke of Brittany. He had ſummoned a parliament to meet at Weſtminſter [a]; and he ſoon perſuaded them to grant him a conſiderable ſubſidy [b]. But this ſupply, tho' voted by parliament, involved the King in unexpected difficulties. The counties of Durham and York, always diſcontented with Henry's government, and farther provoked by the late oppreſſions, under which they had laboured, after the ſuppreſſion of Simnel's rebellion, reſiſted the commiſſioners who were appointed to levy the new tax. The commiſſioners, terrified with this appearance of ſedition, made application to the earl of Northumberland, and deſired of him advice and aſſiſtance in the execution of their office. That nobleman thought the matter of importance enough to conſult the King; who, unwilling to yield to the humours of a diſcontented populace, and foreſeeing the pernicious conſequences of ſuch a precedent, renewed his orders for a ſtrict levy of the impoſition. Northumberland ſummoned together the juſtices and chief freeholders, and delivered the King's commands in the moſt imperious terms, which, he thought, would inforce obedience, but which tended only to provoke the people, and make them believe him

An inſurrection in the north.

[a] 9th November, 1487.

[b] Polydore Virgil, p. 579, ſays that this impoſition was a capitation tax; the other hiſtorians ſay it was a tax of two ſhillings on the pound.

the

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1488. the adviſer of thoſe orders which he delivered to them c. They flew to arms, and attacked Northumberland's houſe, whom they put to death. Having incurred ſuch deep guilt, their mutinous humour prompted them to declare againſt the King himſelf; and being inſtigated by one John Achamber, a ſeditious fellow of mean birth, they choſe Sir John Egremond their leader, and prepared themſelves for a vigorous reſiſtance. Henry was not diſmayed with an inſurrection ſo precipitant and ill ſupported. He immediately levied a force which he put under the command of the earl of Surrey, whom he had delivered from confinement, and reſtored to his favour. His intention was to ſend down theſe troops, in order to check the progreſs of the rebels; while he himſelf ſhould follow with a greater body, which would abſolutely inſure ſucceſs. But Surrey thought himſelf ſtrong enough to encounter a raw and unarmed multitude; and he ſucceeded in the attempt. The rebels were diſſipated; John Achamber taken priſoner, and afterwards executed with ſome of his accomplices; Sir John Egremond fled to the dutcheſs of Burgundy, who gave him protection; the greater number of the rebels received a pardon.

Suppreſſed.

HENRY had probably expected, when he obtained this grant from the parliament, that he ſhould be able to terminate the affair of Brittany by negotiation, and that he might thereby fill his coffers with the money levied by the impoſition. But as the diſtreſſes of the Bretons ſtill multiplied, and became every day more urgent; he found himſelf under the neceſſity of taking ſome meaſures, in order to ſupport them. On the death of the duke, the French had revived ſome antiquated claims to the dominion of the dutchy; and as the duke of Orleans was now captive in France, their former pretence for

c Bacon, p. 595.

hoſti-

hoſtilities could no longer ſerve as a cover to their ambition. The King reſolved therefore to engage as auxiliary to Brittany; and to conſult the intereſt, as well as deſires of the people, by oppoſing himſelf to the progreſs of the French power. Beſides entering into a league with Maximilian, and another with Ferdinand, which were diſtant reſources, he levied a body of troops, to the number of 6000 men, with an intention of tranſporting them into Brittany. Still anxious, however, for the payment of his expences, he concluded a treaty with the young dutcheſs, by which ſhe engaged to deliver into his hands two ſea-port towns, there to remain till ſhe ſhould entirely refund the charges of the armament [d]. Tho' he engaged for the ſervice of theſe troops during the ſpace of eight months only, yet was the dutcheſs obliged, by the neceſſity of her affairs, to ſubmit to ſuch rigid conditions, impoſed by an ally, ſo much concerned in intereſt to protect her. The forces arrived under the command of lord Willoughby of Broke; and made the Bretons, during ſome time, maſters of the field. The French retired into their garriſons; and propoſed by dilatory meaſures to waſte the fire of the Engliſh, and diſguſt them with their enterprize. The ſcheme was well laid, and met with ſucceſs. Lord Broke found ſuch diſcord and confuſion in the councils of Brittany, that no meaſures could be concerted for any undertaking; no ſupply obtained; no proviſions, carriages, artillery, or military ſtores procured. The whole court was rent into factions: No one miniſter had acquired the aſcendant: And whatever project was formed by one, was ſure to be traverſed by another. The Engliſh, diſconcerted in every enterprize, by theſe animoſities and uncertain councils, returned home as ſoon as the time of

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King ſends forces into Brittany.

[d] Du Tillet, Recueil des Traitez.

their

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their ſervice was elapſed; leaving only a ſmall garriſon in thoſe towns which had been put into their hands. During their ſtay in Brittany, they had only contributed ſtill farther to waſte the country; and by their departure, they left it entirely at the mercy of the enemy. So feeble was the ſuccour, which Henry in this important conjuncture afforded his ally, whom the invaſion of a foreign enemy, concurring with domeſtic diſſenſions, had reduced to the utmoſt diſtreſs!

1489.

THE great object of diſſenſion among the Bretons was the diſpoſal of the young dutcheſs in marriage. The mareſchal Rieux ſeconded the ſuit of the lord Albert, who led ſome forces to her aſſiſtance. The chancellor Montauban, obſerving the averſion of the dutcheſs to this ſuitor, inſiſted, that a petty prince, ſuch as Albert, was unable to ſupport Anne in her preſent extremities; and he recommended ſome more powerful alliance, particularly that of Maximilian, King of the Romans. This party at laſt prevailed; the marriage with Maximilian was celebrated by proxy; and the dutcheſs thenceforth aſſumed the title of Queen of the Romans. But this magnificent appellation was all ſhe gained by her marriage. Maximilian, deſtitute of troops and money, and embarraſſed with the continual revolts of the Flemings, could give no aſſiſtance to his diſtreſſed conſort: While Albert, enraged at the preference given his rival, deſerted her cauſe, and received the French into Nantz, the moſt important place in the dutchy, both for ſtrength and riches.

1490.

THE French court began now to change their ſcheme with regard to the ſubjection of Brittany. Charles had formerly been affianced to Margaret daughter of Maximilian; who, tho' too young to conſummate her marriage, had been ſent to Paris to be educated, and at this time

time bore the title of Queen of France. Beſides the rich dowry, which ſhe brought the King, ſhe was, after her brother, Philip, then in early youth, heireſs to all the dominions of the houſe of Burgundy; and ſeemed in many reſpects the moſt proper match, which could be choſen for the young monarch. Theſe circumſtances had ſo blinded the councils both of Maximilian and Henry, that they never ſuſpected any other intentions in the French court; nor were able to diſcover, that engagements, ſeemingly ſo advantageous and ſo ſolemnly entered into, could be infringed and ſet aſide. But Charles began to perceive, that the conqueſt of Brittany, in oppoſition to the natives, and to all the great powers in Chriſtendom, would prove a very difficult enterprize; and that even, if he ſhould over-run the country and make himſelf maſter of the fortreſſes, it would be impoſſible for him long to retain poſſeſſion of them. The marriage alone of the dutcheſs could fully re-annex that fief to the crown; and the preſent and certain enjoyment of ſo conſiderable a territory ſeemed preferable to the proſpect of inheriting the dominions of the houſe of Burgundy; a proſpect which became every day more diſtant and precarious. Above all, the marriage of Maximilian and Anne, appeared deſtructive to the grandeur and even ſecurity of the French monarchy; while that prince, poſſeſſing Flanders on the one hand, and Brittany on the other, might thus from both quarters make inroads into the heart of the country. The only remedy for theſe evils was therefore concluded to be the diſſolution of the two marriages, which had been celebrated, but not conſummated; and the eſpouſal of the dutcheſs of Brittany by the King of France.

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It was requiſite that this expedient, which had not been foreſeen by any court of Europe, and which they were,

CHAP. XXV. 1490.

were, all of them, so much engaged in point of interest to oppose, should be kept a profound secret, and should be discovered to the world only by the full execution of it. The measures of the French ministry were in the conduct of this delicate enterprize very wise and political. While they pressed Brittany with all the rigours of war, they secretly gained the count of Dunois, who possessed great authority with the Bretons; and having also engaged in their interests the prince of Orange, cousin-german to the dutchess, they gave him his liberty, and sent him into Brittany. These persons, supported by other emissaries of France, prepared the minds of men for the great revolution projected, and displayed, tho' still with many precautions, all the advantages of an union with the French monarchy. They represented to the barons of Brittany, that their country, harrassed during so many years with perpetual war, had need of some repose, and of a solid and lasting peace with the only power that was formidable to them: That their alliance with Maximilian was not able to afford them even present protection; and by uniting them closely with a power, which was rival to the greatness of France, fixed them in perpetual enmity with that powerful monarchy: That their near neighbourhood exposed them first to the inroads of the enemy; and the happiest event, which in such a situation could befal them, would be to attain to peace, tho' by a final subjection to France, and by the loss of that liberty, transmitted to them from their ancestors: And that any other expedient, compatible with the honour of the state, and their duty to their sovereign, was preferable to a scene of such disorder and devastation.

THESE suggestions had influence on the Bretons: But the chief difficulty lay in surmounting the prejudices of the young dutchess herself. That princess had imbibed a

ſtrong prejudice againſt the French nation, and particularly againſt Charles, who had been the author of all the calamities, which, from her earlieſt infancy, had befallen her family. She had alſo fixed her affections on Maximilian; and as ſhe now deemed him her huſband, ſhe could not, ſhe thought, without incurring the greateſt guilt, and violating the moſt ſolemn engagements, contract a marriage with another perſon. In order to overcome her obſtinacy, Charles gave the duke of Orleans his liberty, who, tho' formerly a ſuitor to the dutcheſs, was now contented to ingratiate himſelf with the King, by employing in his favour all the intereſt which he ſtill poſſeſſed in Brittany. The mareſchal Rieux and chancellor Montauban were reconciled by his negotiations; and theſe rival miniſters now concurred with the prince of Orange, and the count of Dunois, in preſſing the concluſion of a marriage with Charles. By their ſuggeſtion, Charles advanced with a powerful army and inveſted Rennes, at that time the reſidence of the dutcheſs; who, aſſailed on all hands, and finding none to ſupport her in her inflexibility, at laſt opened the gates of the city, and agreed to eſpouſe the King of France. She was married at Langey in Touraine; conducted to St. Denis, where ſhe was crowned; and thence made her entry into Paris, amidſt the joyful acclamations of the people, who regarded this marriage as the moſt proſperous event that could have befallen their monarchy.

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1490.

1491.

Annexation of Brittany to France.

The triumph and ſucceſs of Charles was the moſt ſenſible mortification to the King of the Romans. He had loſt a conſiderable territory, which he thought he had acquired, and an accompliſhed princeſs whom he had eſpouſed; he was affronted in the perſon of his daughter Margaret, who was ſent back to him, after ſhe had been treated during ſome years as Queen of France; he had reaſon

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were, all of them, ſo much engaged in point of intereſt to oppoſe, ſhould be kept a profound ſecret, and ſhould be diſcovered to the world only by the full execution of it. The meaſures of the French miniſtry were in the conduct of this delicate enterprize very wiſe and political. While they preſſed Brittany with all the rigours of war, they ſecretly gained the count of Dunois, who poſſeſſed great authority with the Bretons; and having alſo engaged in their intereſts the prince of Orange, couſin-german to the dutcheſs, they gave him his liberty, and ſent him into Brittany. Theſe perſons, ſupported by other emiſſaries of France, prepared the minds of men for the great revolution projected, and diſplayed, tho' ſtill with many precautions, all the advantages of an union with the French monarchy. They repreſented to the barons of Brittany, that their country, harraſſed during ſo many years with perpetual war, had need of ſome repoſe, and of a ſolid and laſting peace with the only power that was formidable to them: That their alliance with Maximilian was not able to afford them even preſent protection; and by uniting them cloſely with a power, which was rival to the greatneſs of France, fixed them in perpetual enmity with that powerful monarchy: That their near neighbourhood expoſed them firſt to the inroads of the enemy; and the happieſt event, which in ſuch a ſituation could befal them, would be to attain to peace, tho' by a final ſubjection to France, and by the loſs of that liberty, tranſmitted to them from their anceſtors: And that any other expedient, compatible with the honour of the ſtate, and their duty to their ſovereign, was preferable to a ſcene of ſuch diſorder and devaſtation.

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The triumph and ſucceſs of Charles was the moſt ſenſible mortification to the King of the Romans. He had loſt a conſiderable territory, which he thought he had acquired, and an accompliſhed princeſs whom he had eſpouſed; he was affronted in the perſon of his daughter Margaret, who was ſent back to him, after ſhe had been treated during ſome years as Queen of France; he had reaſon

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reaſon to reproach himſelf with his own ſupine ſecurity, in neglecting the conſummation of his marriage, which was eaſily practicable for him, and which would have rendered the tye indiſſoluble: Theſe conſiderations threw him into the moſt violent rage, which he vented in very indecent expreſſions; and he threatened France with an invaſion from the united arms of Auſtria, Spain and England.

THE King of England had alſo juſt reaſon to reproach himſelf with miſconduct in this important tranſaction; and tho' the affair had terminated in a manner which he could not preciſely foreſee, his negligence, in leaving his moſt uſeful ally ſo long expoſed to the invaſion of ſuperior power, could not but appear on reflection the reſult of timid caution and narrow politics. As he valued himſelf very much on his extenſive foreſight and profound judgment, the aſcendant acquired over him, by a raw youth, ſuch as Charles, could not but give him the higheſt diſpleaſure, and prompt him to ſeek vengeance, after all remedy for his miſcarriage was become abſolutely impracticable. But he was farther actuated by avarice, a motive ſtill more predominant with him than either pride or revenge; and he ſought even from his preſent diſappointments, the gratification of this ruling paſſion. On pretence of a French war, he iſſued a commiſſion for levying a *Benevolence* on his people [f]; an arbitrary taxation, which had been aboliſhed by a recent law of Richard the third, and which was the more provoking, becauſe, tho' really raiſed by menaces and extortion, it was nevertheleſs pretended to be given by the voluntary conſent of the people. This violence fell chiefly on the commercial part of the nation, who were poſſeſſed of

7th July.

[f] Rymer, vol. xii. p. 446. Bacon ſays that the benevolence was levied with conſent of parliament, which is a miſtake.

the

the ready money. London alone contributed to the amount of near 10,000 pounds. Archbiſhop Morton, the chancellor, inſtructed the commiſſioners to employ a dilemma, in which every one might be comprehended: If the perſons applied to lived frugally, they were told, that their parſimony muſt neceſſarily have enriched them: If their method of living was ſplendid and hoſpitable, they were concluded opulent on account of their expences. This device was by ſome called chancellor Morton's fork, and by others his crutch. CHAP. XXV. 1491.

So little apprehenſive was the King of a parliament, on account of his levying this arbitrary impoſition, that he ſoon after ſummoned that aſſembly to meet at Weſtminſter; and he even expected to enrich himſelf farther by working on their paſſions and prejudices. He knew the reſentment, which the Engliſh had conceived againſt France, on account of the conqueſt of Brittany; and he took care to inſiſt on that topic, in the ſpeech, which he himſelf pronounced to the parliament. He told them, that France, elevated with her late ſucceſſes, had even proceeded to a contempt of England, and had refuſed to pay the tribute, which Lewis the eleventh had ſtipulated to Edward the fourth: That it became ſo warlike a nation as the Engliſh to be rouzed by this indignity, and not to limit their pretenſions merely to repreſſing the preſent injury: That for his part, he was determined to lay claim to the crown of France itſelf, and to maintain by force of arms ſo juſt a title tranſmitted to him by his gallant anceſtors: That Crecy, Poictiers, and Azincourt were ſufficient to inſtruct them in their ſuperiority over the enemy; nor did he deſpair of adding new names to the glorious catalogue: That a King of France had been priſoner at London, and a King of England had been crowned at Paris; events which ſhould animate 27th October. A parliament.

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1491. them to an emulation of like glory with that enjoyed by their forefathers: That the domeſtic diſſenſions of England had been the ſole cauſe of her loſing theſe foreign dominions; and her preſent union and harmony would be the effectual means of recovering them: That where ſuch laſting honour was in view, and ſuch an important acquiſition, it became not brave men to repine at the advance of a little treaſure: And that for his part, he was determined to make the war maintain itſelf, and hoped, by the invaſion of ſo opulent a kingdom as France, to encreaſe, rather than diminiſh, the riches of the nation [z].

1492. NOTWITHSTANDING theſe magnificent vaunts of the King, all men of penetration concluded, from the perſonal character of the man, and ſtill more, from the ſituation of his affairs, that he had no ſerious intention of puſhing the war to ſuch extremity as he pretended. France was not now in the ſame condition as when ſuch ſucceſsful inroads had been made into her by the former Kings of England. The great fiefs were united to the crown; the princes of the blood were deſirous of peace and tranquility; the kingdom abounded with able captains and veteran ſoldiers; and the general aſpect of its affairs ſeemed rather to threaten its neighbours, than to promiſe them any conſiderable advantages againſt it. The levity and vain-glory of Maximilian were ſupported by his pompous titles; but were ill ſeconded by military power, and ſtill leſs, by any revenue, proportioned to them. The politic Ferdinand, while he made a ſhow of war, was actually negotiating for peace; and rather than expoſe himſelf to any hazard, would accept of very moderate conceſſions from France. Even England was not

[z] Bacon, p. 601.

free

free from domeſtic diſcontents; and in Scotland, the death of Henry's friend and ally, James the third, who had been murdered by his rebellious ſubjects, had made way for the ſucceſſion of his ſon, James the fourth, who was devoted to the French intereſt, and would ſurely be alarmed at any progreſs of the Engliſh arms. But all theſe obvious conſiderations had no influence with the parliament. Inflamed by the ideas of ſubduing France, and of inriching themſelves with the ſpoils of that kingdom, they gave into the ſnare prepared for them, and voted the ſupply which the King demanded. Two fifteenths were granted him; and the better to enable his vaſſals and nobility to attend him, an act was paſſed, empowering them to ſell their eſtates, without paying any fines for alienation. CHAP. XXV. 1492.

THE nobility were univerſally ſeized with a deſire of military glory; and having credulouſly ſwallowed all the boaſts of the King, they dreamed of no leſs than carrying their triumphant arms to the gates of Paris, and putting the crown of France on Henry's head. Many of them borrowed large ſums or ſold off manors, that they might appear in the field with greater ſplendour, and lead out their followers in more compleat order. The King croſſed the ſeas, and arrived at Calais on the ſixth of October, with an army of twenty-five thouſand foot and ſixteen hundred horſe, which he put under the command of the duke of Bedford and the earl of Oxford: But as ſome inferred, from his opening the campaign in ſo late a ſeaſon, that peace would ſoon be concluded between the crowns, he was deſirous of ſuggeſting a contrary inference. "He had come over," he ſaid, "to "make an entire conqueſt of France, which was not "the work of one ſummer. It was therefore of no "conſequence at what ſeaſon he began the invaſion; War with France.

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1492. Invasion of France.

"especially as he had Calais ready for winter quarters." As if he had seriously intended this enterprize, he instantly marched with his army into the enemy's country and laid siege to Bulloigne: But notwithstanding this appearance of a hostile disposition, there had been secret advances made towards a peace above three months before; and commissioners had been appointed to treat of the terms.[X] The better to reconcile the minds of men to this unexpected measure, the King's ambassadors arrived in the camp from the Low Countries, and informed him, that Maximilian was in no readiness to join him; nor was any assistance to be hoped for from that quarter. Soon after, messengers came from Spain, and brought news of a peace concluded between that kingdom and France, in which Charles had made a cession of the counties of Roussillon and Cerdagne to Ferdinand. Tho' these articles of intelligence were carefully dispersed thro' the army, the King was still apprehensive, lest a sudden peace, after such magnificent promises and high expectations, might expose him to great reproach. In order the more effectually to cover the intended measures, he secretly engaged the marquis of Dorset, together with twenty three persons of condition, to present him a petition for his agreeing to a treaty with France. The pretence was founded on the late season of the year, the difficulty of supplying the army at Calais during winter, the obstacles which arose in the siege of Bulloigne, the desertion of those allies whose assistance had been most relied on: Events which might, all of them, have been foreseen before the embarkation of the troops.

In consequence of these preparatory steps, the bishop of Exeter and the lord Daubeney were sent to confer at Estaples with the mareschal de Cordes, and to put the last hand to the treaty. A few days sufficed for this purpose: The

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1492. 3d of November. Peace with France.

The demands of Henry were wholly pecuniary; and the King of France, who deemed the peaceable poſſeſſion of Brittany an equivalent for any money, and who was all on fire for his projected expedition into Italy, readily agreed to the propoſals made him. He engaged to pay Henry ſeven hundred and forty-five thouſand crowns, about one hundred and eighty-ſix thouſand pounds ſterling; partly as a reimburſement of the ſums advanced for Brittany, partly as arrears of the penſion due to Edward the fourth. And he ſtipulated a yearly penſion to Henry and his heirs of twenty-five thouſand crowns. Thus the King, as remarked by his hiſtorian, made profit upon his ſubjects for the war; and upon his enemies for the peace [h]. And the people agreed, that he had fulfilled his promiſe, when he ſaid to the parliament, that he would make the war maintain itſelf. Maximilian was comprehended in Henry's treaty, if he pleaſed to accept of it; but he diſdained to be in any reſpect beholden to an ally, of whom, he thought, he had reaſon to complain: He made a ſeparate peace with France, and obtained reſtitution of Artois, Franchecomte and Charolois, which had been given as the dowry of his daughter, when ſhe was affianced to the King of France.

THE peace, concluded between England and France, was the more likely to continue, becauſe Charles, full of ambition and youthful hopes, bent all his attention to the ſide of Italy, and ſoon after undertook the conqueſt of Naples; an enterprize, which Henry regarded with the greater indifference, as Naples lay remote from him, and France had never, in any age, been ſucceſsful on that quarter. The King's authority was fully eſtabliſhed at home; and every rebellion, which had been attempted

[h] Bacon, p. 605. Pol. Virg. p. 586.

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againſt him, had hitherto tended only to confound his enemies, and conſolidate his power and influence. His reputation for policy and conduct was every day agumenting; his treaſures had encreaſed even from the moſt unproſperous events; the hopes of all pretenders to his throne were cut off, as well by his marriage, as by the iſſue which it had brought him. In this promiſing ſituation, the King had reaſon to flatter himſelf with the proſpect of a durable peace and tranquility: But his inveterate and indefatigable enemies, whom he had wantonly provoked, raiſed him up an adverſary, who kept him long in inquietude, and ſometimes even brought him into danger.

THE dutcheſs of Burgundy, full of reſentment for the depreſſion of her family and its partizans, rather irritated than diſcouraged by the ill ſucceſs of her paſt enterprizes, was determined at leaſt to diſturb that government, which ſhe found it ſo difficult to ſubvert. By means of her emiſſaries, ſhe propagated the report, that her nephew, Richard Plantagenet, duke of York, had eſcaped from the Tower when his elder brother was murdered, and that he lay ſtill ſomewhere concealed: And finding this rumour, however improbable, to be greedily received by the people, ſhe had been looking out for ſome young man, proper to perſonate that unfortunate prince.

Perkin Warbec.

THERE was one Oſbec or Warbec, a renegado Jew of Tournay, who had been carried by ſome buſineſs to London in the reign of Edward the fourth, and had there a ſon born to him. Having had opportunities of being known to the King, and obtaining his favour, he prevailed with that prince, whoſe manners were very affable, to ſtand godfather to his ſon, to whom he gave the name of Peter, corrupted after the Flemiſh manner, into Peterkin, or Perkin. It was by ſome believed, that Edward,

among his other amorous adventures, had had a ſecret correſpondence with Warbec's wife, and from this incident people accounted for that reſemblance, which was afterwards remarked between young Perkin and that monarch [1]. Some years after the birth of this child, Warbec returned to Tournay; where Perkin his ſon remained not long, but by different accidents was carried from place to place, and his birth and fortunes became thereby unknown, and difficult to be traced by the moſt diligent enquiry. The variety of his adventures had happily favoured the natural verſatility and ſagacity of his genius; and he ſeemed to be a youth perfectly fitted to act any part, or aſſume any character. In this light he had been repreſented to the dutcheſs of Burgundy, who, ſtruck with the concurrence of ſo many circumſtances ſuited to her purpoſe, deſired to be made acquainted with the man, on whom ſhe began already to ground her hopes of ſucceſs. She found him to exceed her moſt ſanguine expectations; ſo beautiful did he appear in his perſon, ſo graceful in his air, ſo courtly in his addreſs, ſo full of docility and good ſenſe in his behaviour and converſation. The leſſons, which were neceſſary to be taught him, in order to his perſonating the duke of York, were ſoon learned by a youth of ſuch quick apprehenſion; but as the ſeaſon ſeemed not then favourable for his enterprize, Margaret, in order the better to conceal him, ſent him, under the care of Lady Brampton, into Portugal, where he remained a year, unknown to all the world.

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His impoſture.

THE war, which was then ready to break out between France and England, ſeemed to afford a proper opportunity for the diſcovery of this new phænomenon; and Ireland, which ſtill retained its attachments to the houſe

[1] Bacon, p. 606.

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1492. of York, was pitched on as the proper place for his firſt appearance [k]. He landed at Corke; and immediately aſſuming the name of Richard Plantagenet, drew to him partizans among that ignorant and credulous people. He wrote letters to the earls of Deſmond and Kildare, inviting them to join his party: He diſperſed every where the ſtrange intelligence of his eſcape from his uncle Richard's cruelty; and men, fond of every thing new and wonderful, began to make him the general ſubject of their diſcourſe, and even the object of their favour.

THE news ſoon reached France; and Charles, prompted by the private ſollicitations of the dutcheſs of Burgundy, and the intrigues of one Frion, a ſecretary of Henry, who had deſerted his ſervice, ſent Perkin an invitation to repair to him at Paris. He received him with all the marks of regard due to the duke of York; ſettled on him a handſome penſion, aſſigned him magnificent lodgings, and in order to provide at once for his dignity and ſecurity, gave him a guard for his perſon, of which lord Congreſall accepted the office of captain. The French courtiers readily embraced a fiction, which their ſovereign thought it his intereſt to adopt: Perkin, both by his deportment and perſon, ſupported the prepoſſeſſion, which was ſpread abroad of his royal pedigree: And the whole kingdom was full of the accompliſhments as well as ſingular adventures and misfortunes, of the young Plantagenet. Wonders of this nature are commonly augmented at a diſtance. From France, the admiration and credulity diffuſed themſelves into England: Sir George Neville, Sir John Taylor, and above a hundred gentlemen more came to Paris, in order to offer their ſervice to the ſuppoſed duke of York, and to ſhare his

[k] Polyd. Virg. p. 589.

fortunes:

fortunes: And the impoſtor had now the appearance of a court attending him, and began to entertain hopes of final ſucceſs in his undertakings. CHAP. XXV. 1492.

WHEN peace was concluded between France and England at Eſtaples, Henry applied to have Perkin put into his hands; but Charles, reſolute not to betray a young man, of whatever birth, whom he had invited into his kingdom, would agree only to diſmiſs him. The pretended Plantagenet retired to the dutcheſs of Burgundy in Flanders, and craving her protection and aſſiſtance, offered to lay before her all the proofs of that birth, to which he laid claim. The princeſs affected ignorance of his pretenſions; even put on the appearance of diſtruſt; and having, as ſhe ſaid, been already deceived by Simnel's claim, ſhe was determined never again to be ſeduced by any impoſtor. She deſired before all the world to be inſtructed in his reaſons for aſſuming the name which he bore; ſeemed to examine every circumſtance with the moſt ſcrupulous nicety; put many particular queſtions to him; affected aſtoniſhment at his anſwers; and at laſt, after long and ſevere ſcrutiny, burſt out into joy and admiration at his wonderful deliverey, embraced him as her nephew, the true image of Edward, the ſole heir of the Plantagenets, and the legitimate ſucceſſor of the Engliſh throne. She immediately aſſigned him an equipage, ſuited to his pretended birth; appointed him a guard of thirty halberdiers; engaged every one to pay court to him; and on all occaſions honoured him with the appellation of the *White Roſe of England*. The Flemings, moved by the authority, which Margaret, both from her rank and perſonal character, enjoyed among them, readily adopted the fiction of Perkin's royal deſcent: No ſurmize

He is avowed by the dutcheſs of Burgundy.

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mize of his true birth was as yet heard of: Little contradiction was made to the prevailing opinion: And the Engliſh, from their great communication with the natives of the Low Countries, were every day more and more prepoſſeſſed in favour of the impoſtor.

and by many of the Engliſh nobility.

It was not the populace alone of England, that gave credit to Perkin's pretenſions. Men of the higheſt birth and quality, diſguſted with Henry's government, by which they found the nobility depreſſed, began to turn their eyes towards this new claimant, and ſome of them even entered into a correſpondence with him. Lord Fitzwater, Sir Simon Mountfort, Sir Thomas Thwaites betrayed their inclination towards him: Sir William Stanley himſelf, lord chamberlain, who had been ſo active in raiſing Henry to the throne, moved either by blind credulity or a reſtleſs ambition, entertained the project of a revolt in favour of his enemy [a]. Sir Robert Clifford and William Barley were ſtill more open in their meaſures: They went over to Flanders, offered their ſervice to Perkin, and were introduced by the dutcheſs of Burgundy to his acquaintance. Clifford wrote back to England, that he knew perfectly the perſon of Richard duke of York, that this young man was undoubtedly that prince himſelf, and that no circumſtance of his ſtory was expoſed to the leaſt difficulty. Such poſitive intelligence, conveyed by a perſon of ſuch high rank and character, was ſufficient with many to put the matter beyond all queſtion, and excited the wonder and attention even of the moſt indifferent. The whole nation was held in ſuſpence; a regular conſpiracy was formed againſt the King's authority; and a correſpondence ſettled between the malecontents in Flanders and thoſe in England.

[a] Bacon, p. 608.

THE

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THE King was well informed of all theſe particulars; but agreeable to his character, which was both cautious and reſolute, he proceeded very deliberately, but ſteadily, in counter-working the projects of his enemies. His firſt object was to aſcertain the death of the real duke of York, and to confirm the opinion, which had always prevailed with regard to that event. Five perſons had been employed by Richard in the murder of his nephews; Sir James Tirrel, to whom he had committed the government of the Tower for that purpoſe, and who had ſeen the dead princes; Forreſt, Dighton, and Slater, who perpetrated the action; and the prieſt who buried the bodies. Tirrel and Dighton alone were alive, and they agreed in the ſame ſtory; but as the prieſt was dead, and as the bodies had been removed by Richard's orders from the place where they were firſt interred, and could not now be found, it was not in Henry's power to put the fact, ſo much as he wiſhed, beyond all doubt and controverſy.

HE met at firſt with more difficulty, but was in the end more ſucceſsful, in detecting who this wonderful perſon was that thus boldly advanced pretenſions to his crown. He diſperſed his ſpies all over Flanders and England; he engaged many to pretend that they had embraced Perkin's party; he directed them to inſinuate themſelves into the confidence of his friends; in proportion as they conveyed intelligence of any conſpirator, he bribed his retainers, his domeſtic ſervants, nay ſometimes his confeſſor, and by theſe means traced up ſome other confederate; Clifford himſelf he engaged by hopes of reward and pardon, to betray the ſecrets committed to him; the more truſt he gave any of his ſpies, the higher reſentment did he feign againſt them; ſome of them he even cauſed to be excommunicated and publicly

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licly anathematized, in order the better to procure them the confidence of his enemies: And in the iſſue, the whole plan of the conſpiracy was laid clearly before him; and the pedigree, adventures, life and converſation of the pretended duke of York. This latter part of the ſtory was immediately publiſhed for the ſatisfaction of the nation: The conſpirators he reſerved for a ſlower and more ſecure vengeance.

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1494. MEANWHILE, he remonſtrated with the archduke Philip, on account of the countenance and protection, which was afforded in his dominions to ſo infamous an impoſture; contrary to treaties ſubſiſting betwe en the ſovereigns, and to the mutual amity, which had ſo long been maintained by the ſubjects of both ſtates. Margaret had intereſt enough to get his applications rejected; on pretence that Philip had no authority over the demeſnes of the dutcheſs dowager. And the King, in reſentment of this injury, cut off all commerce with the Low Countries, baniſhed the Flemings from England, and recalled his own ſubjects from theſe provinces. Philip retaliated by like edicts; but Henry knew, that ſo mutinous a people as the Flemings would not long bear, in compliance with the humours of their prince, to be deprived of ſo beneficial a branch of commerce as that which they carried on with England.

HE had it in his power to inflict more effectual puniſhment on his domeſtic enemies; and when his projects were ſufficiently matured, he failed not to make them feel the effects of his reſentment. Almoſt in the ſame inſtant, he arreſted Fitzwater, Mountfort, and Thwaites, together with William Daubeney, Robert Ratcliff, Thomas Creſſenor, and Thomas Aſtwood.

All theſe were arraigned, convicted, and condemned for high treaſon, in adhering and promiſing aid to Perkin. Mountfort, Ratcliff, and Daubeney were immediately executed: Fitzwater was ſent over to Calais, and retained in cuſtody; but having practiſed on his keeper for an eſcape, he ſoon after underwent the ſame fate. The reſt were pardoned, together with William Worſeley, dean of St. Paul's, and ſome others, who had been accuſed and examined, but not brought to public trial [b]. CHAP. XXV. 1494.

GREATER and more ſolemn preparations were deemed requiſite for the trial of Stanley, lord chamberlain, whoſe authority in the nation, whoſe domeſtic connexions with the King, as well as his former great ſervices, ſeemed to ſecure him againſt any accuſation or puniſhment. Clifford was directed to come over privately to England, and to throw himſelf at the King's feet, while placed at the council-table; craving pardon for his paſt offences, and offering to atone for them by any ſervices, which ſhould be required of him. Henry told him, that the beſt proof he could give of penitence, and the only ſervice he could now render him, was the full confeſſion of his guilt, and the diſcovery of all his accomplices, however diſtinguiſhed by rank or character. Encouraged by this exhortation, Clifford accuſed Stanley then preſent, as his chief abettor; and offered to lay before the council the whole proof of his guilt. Stanley himſelf could not diſcover more ſurprize than was affected by Henry on this occaſion. He received the intelligence as abſolutely falſe and incredible; that a man, to whom he was in a great meaſure beholden for his crown, and even for his life; a man, to whom, by every honour and favour, he had endeavoured to expreſs his gratitude;

[b] Polydore Virgil, p. 592.

whoſe

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1494. whoſe brother, the earl of Derby, was the King's father-in-law; to whom he had even committed the truſt of his perſon, by creating him lord chamberlain: That this man, enjoying his full confidence and affection, not actuated by any motive of diſcontent or apprehenſion, ſhould engage in a conſpiracy againſt him. Clifford was therefore exhorted to weigh well the conſequences of this accuſation; but as he perſiſted in the ſame poſitive aſſeverations, Stanley was committed to cuſtody, and was ſoon after examined before the council [c]. He denied not the guilt imputed to him by Clifford; he did not even endeavour much to extenuate it; whether he thought that a frank and open confeſſion would ſerve for an atonement, or truſted to his preſent connexions, and his former ſervices, for pardon and ſecurity. But princes are often apt to regard great ſervices as a ground of jealouſy, eſpecially if accompanied with a craving and reſtleſs diſpoſition, in the perſon who has performed them. The general diſcontent alſo, and mutinous humour of the people, ſeemed to require ſome great example of ſeverity. And as Stanley was one of the moſt opulent ſubjects in the kingdom, being poſſeſſed of above three thouſand pounds a year in land, and forty thouſand marks in plate and money, beſides other property of great value, the proſpect of ſo rich a forfeiture was deemed no ſmall motive in Henry for proceeding to extremity againſt him. After ſix weeks delay, which was interpoſed in order to ſhew that the King was reſtrained by doubts and ſcruples; he was brought to his trial, condemned, and preſently after beheaded. Hiſtorians are not well agreed with regard to the crime which was proved againſt him. The general report is, that he

Trial and execution of Stanley.

1495.

15th Feb.

[c] Bacon, p. 611. Polyd. Virg. p. 593.

ſhould

ſhould have ſaid in confidence to Clifford, that, if he was ſure the young man, who appeared in Flanders, was really ſon to King Edward, he never would bear arms againſt him. This ſentiment might diſguſt Henry as implying a preference of the houſe of York to that of Lancaſter, but could ſcarcely be the ground, even in thoſe arbitrary times, of a ſentence of high treaſon againſt Stanley. It is more probable, therefore, as is aſſerted by ſome hiſtorians, that he had expreſsly engaged to aſſiſt Perkin, and had actually ſent him ſome ſupply of money. CHAP. XXV. 1495.

THE fate of Stanley made great impreſſion on the whole kingdom, and ſtruck all Perkin's retainers with the deepeſt diſmay. From Clifford's deſertion, they found that all their ſecrets were diſcovered; and as it appeared, that Stanley, while he ſeemed to live in the greateſt confidence with the King, had been continually ſurrounded by ſpies, who reported and regiſtered every action which he committed, nay, every word which fell from him, a general diſtruſt took place, and all mutual confidence was deſtroyed, even among the moſt intimate friends and acquaintance. The jealous and ſevere temper of the King, together with his great reputation for ſagacity and penetration, kept men in awe, and quelled not only the movements of ſedition, but the very murmurs of faction. Libels, however, crept out againſt Henry's perſon and adminiſtration; and being greedily propagated, by every ſecret art, ſhowed that there ſtill remained among the people a conſiderable root of diſcontent, which wanted only a proper opportunity to diſcover itſelf.

BUT Henry continued more intent on increaſing the terrors of his people, that on gaining their affections. Truſting to the great ſucceſs which attended him in all

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1495. all his enterprizes, he gave every day, more and more, a looſe to his rapacious temper, and employed the arts of perverted law and juſtice, in order to exact fines and compoſitions from his people. Sir William Capel, alderman of London, was comdemned on ſome penal ſtatutes to pay the ſum of 2743 pounds, and was obliged to compound for ſixteen hundred and fifteen. This was the firſt noted caſe of that nature; but it became a precedent, which prepared the way for many others. The management, indeed, of theſe oppreſſive arts was the great ſecret of the King's adminiſtration. While he depreſſed the nobility, he exalted and honoured and careſſed the lawyers; and by that means both beſtowed authority on the laws, and was enabled, whenever he pleaſed, to pervert them to his own advantage. His government was oppreſſive; but it was ſo much the leſs burthenſome, as, by extending his own authority, and curbing the nobles, he became in reality the ſole oppreſſor in his kingdom.

As Perkin found, that the King's authority gained ground daily among the people, and that his own pretenſions were becoming obſolete, he reſolved to attempt ſomething, which might revive the hopes and expectations of his partizans. Having gathered together a band of outlaws, pirates, robbers, and neceſſitous perſons of all nations, to the number of 600 men, he put to ſea with a reſolution of making a deſcent in England; and of exciting the common people to arms, ſince all his correſpondence with the nobility was cut off by Henry's vigilance and ſeverity. Information being brought him, that the King had made a progreſs to the north, he caſt anchor on the coaſt of Kent, and ſent ſome of his retainers aſhore, who invited the country to join him. The gentlemen of Kent gathered together ſome troops

to

to oppoſe him; but they propoſed to do more eſſential ſervice than by repelling the invaſion: They carried the ſemblance of friendſhip to Perkin, and invited him to come himſelf aſhore, in order to take the command over them. But the wary youth, obſerving that they had more order and regularity in their movements than could be ſuppoſed in new levied forces, who had taken arms againſt eſtabliſhed authority, refuſed to commit himſelf into their hands; and the Kentiſh troops deſpairing of ſucceſs in their ſtratagem, ſet upon ſuch of his retainers, as were already landed; and beſides ſome who were ſlain and ſome who eſcaped, they took an hundred and fifty priſoners. Theſe were tried and condemned; and all of them executed, by order from the King, who was reſolved to uſe no mixture of lenity towards men of ſuch deſperate fortunes [a]. CHAP. XXV. 1495.

THIS year a Parliament was ſummoned in England, and another in Ireland; and ſome remarkable laws were paſſed in both countries. The Engliſh Parliament enacted, that no perſon who ſhould by arms or otherwiſe aſſiſt the King for the time being, ſhould ever afterwards, either by courſe of law or act of Parliament, be attainted for ſuch an inſtance of obedience. This ſtatute might be expoſed to ſome blame, as favourable to uſurpers; were there any preciſe rules, which always, even during the moſt factious times, could determine the true ſucceſſor, and render every one inexcuſable, who did not ſubmit to him. But as the titles of princes are then the great ſubject of diſpute, and each party pleads topics in their own favour, it ſeems but equitable to ſecure thoſe who act in ſupport of public tranquillity, an object at all times of undoubted benefit and importance. Henry, conſcious of his diſputed title, promoted this law in A Parliament.

[a] Polydore Virgil, p. 595.

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order to ſecure his partizans againſt all events; but as he had himſelf obſerved a different practice with regard to Richard's adherents, he had reaſon to apprehend, that, during the violence which uſually enſues on public convulſions, his example, rather than his law, would, in caſe of a new revolution, be followed by his enemies. And the attempt to bind the legiſlature itſelf, by preſcribing rules to future Parliaments, was plainly contradictory to the fundamental principles of political government.

THIS Parliament alſo paſſed an act, impowering the King to levy, by courſe of law, all the ſums which any perſon had agreed to pay by way of benevolence: A ſtatute, by which that arbitrary method of taxation was indirectly authorized and juſtified.

THE King's authority appeared equally prevalent and uncontrolable in Ireland. Sir Edward Poynings had been ſent over with ſome troops into that country, with an intention of quelling the partizans of the houſe of York, and of reducing the natives to ſubjection. He was not ſupported with forces ſufficient for that important enterprize: The Iriſh, by flying into their woods, and moraſſes, and mountains, in ſome meaſure, eluded his efforts: But Poynings ſummoned a parliament at Dublin, where he was more ſucceſsful. He paſſed that memorable ſtatute, which ſtill bears his name, and which eſtabliſhes the authority of the Engliſh government in Ireland. By this ſtatute, all the former laws of England were made to be of force in Ireland; and no bill can be introduced into the Iriſh parliament, unleſs it previouſly receive the ſanction of the council of England. This latter law ſeems calculated for enſuring the dominion of the Engliſh over Ireland; but was really granted at the deſire of the Iriſh Commons, who propoſed,

by that means, to ſecure themſelves from the tyranny of their lords, particularly of ſuch lieutenants as were of Iriſh birth [b]. CHAP. XXV. 1495.

WHILE Henry's authority was thus eſtabliſhed throughout his dominions, and general tranquillity prevailed, the whole continent was thrown into combuſtion by the French invaſion of Italy, and by the rapid ſucceſs which attended Charles in that raſh and ill-concerted enterprize. The Italians, who had entirely loſt the uſe of arms, and who, in the midſt of continual wars, had become every day more unwarlike, were aſtoniſhed to meet with an enemy, that made the field of battle, not a pompous tournament, but a ſcene of blood, and ſought at the hazard of their own lives the death of their enemy. Their effeminate troops were diſſipated every where on the approach of the French army: Their beſt fortified cities opened their gates: Kingdoms and ſtates were in an inſtant overturned: And thro' the whole length of Italy, which the French penetrated without reſiſtance, they ſeemed rather to be taking quarters in their own country, than making conqueſts over an enemy. The maxims, which the Italians, during that age, followed in negotiations, were as ill calculated to ſupport their ſtates, as the habits to which they were addicted in war. A treacherous, deceitful, and inconſtant ſyſtem of politics prevailed; and even thoſe ſmall remains of fidelity and honour, which were preſerved in the councils of the other European princes, were ridiculed in Italy, as proofs of ignorance and ruſticity. Ludovico, duke of Milan, who invited the French to invade Naples, had never deſired nor expected their ſucceſs; and was the firſt alarmed at the proſperous iſſue of thoſe projects, which he himſelf had concerted. By his intrigues a

By usurpation from his nephew John Galeas Sforza, a weak prince married to Jane daughter of Alphonso II King of Naples. Ludovico had been for many years protector to the dukedom, and exercized all the powers of the lawful prince. By a marriage of his niece Bianca Maria Sforza to the King of the Romans in the last year with a dowry of 440000 ducats, he had prevailed upon him to invest him with the dukedom to which he pretended to disprove the title of his nephew; as neither Francis Sforza his Grandfather nor any of his successors had received the imperial investiture from the emperor. See Guicciardini. L. 1. P. 30 Edit. Venet.

[b] Sir John Davis, p. 235.

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1495. league was formed among ſeveral potentates to oppoſe the progreſs of Charles's conqueſts and ſecure their own independency. This league was compoſed of Ludovico himſelf, the pope, Maximilian King of the Romans, Ferdinand of Spain, and the republic of Venice. Henry too entered into the confederacy; but was not put to any expence or trouble in conſequence of his engagements. The King of France, terrified by ſo powerful a combination, retired from Naples with the greateſt part of his army, and returned to France. The forces, which he left in his new conqueſts, partly by the revolt of the inhabitants, partly by the invaſion of the Spaniards, were ſoon after ſubdued; and the whole kingdom of Naples ſuddenly returned to its allegiance under Ferdinand, ſon to Alphonſo, who had been ſuddenly expelled by the irruption of the French. Ferdinand died ſoon after; and left his uncle, Frederic, in peaceable poſſeſſion of the throne.

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CHAP.

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Perkin returns to Scotland——Inſurrection in the Weſt——Battle of Blackheath——Truce with Scotland——Perkin taken priſoner——Perkin executed——The earl of Warwic executed——Marriage of prince Arthur with Catherine of Arragon——His death——Marriage of the princeſs Margaret with the King of Scotland——Oppreſſions of the people——A parliament——Arrival of the King of Caſtile——Intrigues of the earl of Suffolk——Sickneſs of the King——His death——and character——His laws.

AFTER Perkin was repulſed from the coaſt of Kent, he retired into Flanders; but as he found it impoſſible to find ſubſiſtance for himſelf and his followers, while he remained in tranquillity, he ſoon after made an attempt upon Ireland, which had always appeared forward to join every invader of Henry's authority. But Poynings had now put the affairs of that iſland in ſo good a poſture, that Perkin met with little ſucceſs; and being tired of the ſavage life, which he was obliged to lead, while ſkulking among the wild Iriſh, he bent his courſe towards Scotland, and preſented himſelf to James the fourth, who then governed that kingdom. He had been previouſly recommended to that prince by the King of France, who was diſguſted at Henry for entering into the league againſt him; and this recommendation was even ſeconded by Maximilian, who, tho' one of the confederates, ſtood on ill terms with the King, on account

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of his prohibition of commerce with the Low Countries. The countenance given to Perkin by theſe princes procured him a favourable reception with the King of Scotland, who aſſured him, that, whatever he were, he never ſhould repent the putting himſelf into his hands[c]: The inſinuating addreſs and plauſible behaviour of the youth himſelf ſeem even to have gained him credit and authority. James, whom years had not yet taught diſtruſt and caution, was ſeduced to believe the ſtory of Perkin's birth and adventures; and he carried his confidence ſo far as to give him in marriage the lady Catherine Gordon, daughter of the earl of Huntley, and a near kinſwoman of his own; a young lady too, eminent for virtue as well as beauty.

1495. Perkin retires to Scotland.

1496. THERE ſubſiſted at that time a great jealouſy between the courts of England and Scotland; and James was probably the more forward on that account to adopt any fiction, which, he thought, might reduce his enemy to diſtreſs or difficulty. He ſuddenly reſolved to make an inroad into England, attended with ſome of the borderers; and he carried Perkin along with him, in hopes, that the appearance of the pretended prince might raiſe an inſurrection in the northern counties. Perkin himſelf diſperſt a manifeſto, in which he ſet forth his own ſtory, and craved the aſſiſtance of all his ſubjects in expelling the uſurper, whoſe tyranny and mal-adminiſtration, whoſe depreſſion of the nobility by the elevation of mean perſons, whoſe oppreſſion of the people by multiplied impoſitions and vexations, had juſtly, he ſaid, rendered him odious to all men. But Perkin's pretenſions, attended by repeated diſappointments, were now become ſtale in the eyes even of the populace; and the hoſtile

[c] Bacon, p. 615. Polydore Virgil, p. 596, 597.

diſpo-

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diſpoſitions, which ſubſiſted between the kingdoms, rendered a prince, ſupported by the Scots, but an unwelcome preſent to the Engliſh nation. The ravages alſo, committed by the borderers, accuſtomed to licence and diſorder, ſtruck a terror into all men; and made the people prepare rather for repelling the invaders than for joining them. Perkin, that he might ſupport his pretenſions to royal birth, feigned great compaſſion for the miſery of his plundered ſubjects; and publicly remonſtrated with his ally againſt the depredations exerciſed by the Scots army [d]: But James told him, that he doubted his concern was only employed in behalf of his enemy, and that he was anxious to preſerve what never ſhould belong to him. That prince now began to perceive, that his attempt would be fruitleſs; and hearing of an army, which was on its march to attack him, he thought proper to retreat into his own country.

THE King diſcovered little anxiety to procure either reparation or vengeance for this inſult committed on him by the Scots nation: His chief concern was to draw advantage from it, by the pretence which it would afford him to levy impoſitions on his own ſubjects. He ſummoned a parliament, to whom he made bitter complaints againſt the irruption of the Scots, the abſurd impoſture which was countenanced by that nation, the cruel devaſtation which they had ſpread in the northern counties, and the multiplied inſults which had thus been offered both to the King and kingdom of England. The parliament made the expected return to this diſcourſe of the King, by granting him a ſubſidy to the amount of 120,000 pounds, together with two fifteenths. After making this grant, they were diſmiſſed.

[d] Polydore Virgil, p. 598.

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THE vote of parliament for impoſing the tax was without much difficulty procured by the authority of Henry; but he found it not ſo eaſy to levy the money upon his ſubjects. The people, who were acquainted with the immenſe treaſures amaſſed by the King, could ill brook the new impoſitions raiſed on every ſlight occaſion; and it is probable, that the flaw, which was univerſally known to lie in his title, made his reign the more ſubject to inſurrections and rebellions. When the ſubſidy began to be levied in Cornwal, the inhabitants, numerous and poor, robuſt and courageous, murmured againſt a tax, occaſioned by a ſudden inroad of the Scots, from which they eſteemed themſelves entirely ſecure, and which had uſually been repelled by the force of the northern counties. Their ill humour was farther incited by one Michael Joſeph, a farrier of Bodmin, a notable talking fellow, who, by thruſting himſelf forward on every occaſion, and being loudeſt in every complaint againſt the government, had acquired an authority among theſe rude people. Thomas Flammoc too, a lawyer, who had become the oracle of the neighbourhood, encouraged the ſedition, by informing them, that the tax, tho' impoſed by parliament, was entirely illegal; that the northern nobility were obliged, by their tenures, to defend the nation againſt the Scots; and that if theſe new impoſitions were tamely ſubmitted to, the avarice of Henry and of his courtiers would ſoon render the burthen intolerable to the nation. A petition, he ſaid, muſt be delivered to the King, ſeconded by ſuch force as would give it authority; and in order to procure the concurrence of the reſt of the kingdom, care muſt be taken, by their orderly deportment, to ſhew that they had nothing in view but the public good, and the redreſs of all thoſe grievances, under which the people had ſo long laboured.

Inſurrection in the Weſt.

ENCOU-

ENCOURAGED by theſe ſpeeches, the multitude flocked together, and armed themſelves with axes, bills, bows, and ſuch weapons as country people are uſually poſſeſſed of. Flammoc and Joſeph were choſen their leaders. They ſoon conducted the Corniſh thro' the county of Devon, and reached that of Somerſet. At Taunton the rebels killed, in their fury, an officious and eager commiſſioner of the ſubſidy, whom they called the provoſt of Perin. When they reached Wells, they were joined by lord Audley, a nobleman of an antient family, popular in his deportment, but vain, ambitious, and reſtleſs in his temper. He had from the beginning entertained a ſecret correſpondence with the firſt movers of the inſurrection; and was now joyfully received by them as their leader. Proud of the countenance given them by ſo conſiderable a nobleman, they puſhed on their march; breathing deſtruction to the King's miniſters and favourites, particularly Morton, now a cardinal, and Sir Reginald Bray, who were deemed his moſt active inſtruments in all his oppreſſions. Amidſt their rage againſt the adminiſtration, they carefully followed the directions given them by their leaders; and as they met with no reſiſtance, they committed, during their march, no violence or diſorder. CHAP. XXVI. 1497.

THE rebels had been told by Flammoc, that the inhabitants of Kent, as they had ever, during all ages, remained unſubdued, and had even maintained their independancy during the Norman conqueſt, would ſurely embrace their party, and declare themſelves for a cauſe, which was no other than that of public good and general liberty. But the Kentiſh people had very lately diſtinguiſhed themſelves by repelling Perkin's invaſion; and having received from the King many gracious acknowledgments for this ſervice, their affections were,

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1497.

by that means, much conciliated to his government. It was eaſy, therefore, for the earl of Kent, lord Abergavenny, and lord Cobham, who poſſeſſed great authority in thoſe parts, to retain the people in obedience; and the Corniſh rebels, though they pitched their camp near Eltham, at the very gates of London, and invited all the people to join them, got reinforcement from no quarter. There wanted not diſcontents every where, but no one would take part in ſo raſh and ill-concerted an enterprize; and the ſituation in which the King's affairs then ſtood, diſcouraged even the boldeſt and moſt daring.

HENRY, in order to oppoſe the Scots, had already levied an army, which he put under the command of lord Daubeney, the chamberlain; and ſo ſoon as he heard of the Corniſh inſurrection, he ordered it to march ſouthwards, and ſuppreſs the rebels. Not to leave the northern frontier defenceleſs, he diſpatched thither the earl of Surry, who ſummoned out the forces on the borders, and made head againſt the enemy. Henry found here the concurrence of the three moſt fatal incidents, which can befal a monarchy; a foreign enemy, a domeſtic rebellion, and a pretender to his throne; but he enjoyed great reſources in his army and treaſure, and ſtill more, in the intrepidity and courage of his own temper. He gave not, however, immediately full ſcope to his military ſpirit. On other occaſions, he had always haſtened to a deciſion, and it was an uſual ſaying with him, *that he deſired but to ſee his rebels:* But as the Corniſh inſurgents behaved in an inoffenſive manner, and committed no ſpoil on the country; as they received no acceſſion of force on their march or in their encampment; and as ſuch haſty and popular tumults might be expected to diminiſh every moment by delay; he took poſt in London, and carefully prepared the means of enſuring the victory.

AFTER

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1497. Battle of Blackheath.

AFTER all his forces were collected, he divided them into three bodies, and marched out to aſſail the enemy. The firſt body, commanded by the earl of Oxford, and under him by the earls of Eſſex and Suffolk, were appointed to place themſelves behind the hill on which the rebels were encamped: The ſecond and moſt conſiderable, Henry put under the command of lord Daubeney, and ordered him to attack the enemy in front, and bring on the action. The third, he kept as a body of reſerve about his own perſon, and took poſt in St. George's field; where he ſecured the city, and could eaſily, as occaſion ſerved, either reſtore the fight or finiſh the victory. To put the enemy off their guard, he had ſpread a report that he was not to attack them till ſome days after; and the better to confirm them in this opinion, he began not the action till near the evening. Daubeney beat a detachment of the rebels from Deptford-bridge; and before the main body could be in order to receive him, he had gained the aſcent of the hill, and placed himſelf in array before them. They were very formidable for their numbers, being ſixteen thouſand ſtrong, and were not defective in valour; but being tumultuary troops, ill armed, and unprovided of cavalry or artillery, they were but an unequal match for the King's forces. Daubeney began the attack with courage, and even with a contempt of the enemy, which had almoſt proved fatal to him. He ruſhed into the midſt of them, and was taken priſoner; but ſoon after was relieved by his own troops. After ſome reſiſtance, the rebels were broke, and put to flight [a]. Lord Audley, Flammoc, and Joſeph, their leaders, were taken, and all three executed. The latter ſeemed even to exult in his end, and boaſted, with a prepoſterous ambition, that

June 22d.

[a] Polydore Virgil, p. 601.

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he ſhould make a figure in hiſtory. The rebels, being ſurrounded on every ſide by the King's troops, were almoſt all made priſoners; and immediately diſmiſſed without farther puniſhment: Whether, that Henry was ſatisfied with the victims who had fallen in the field, and who amounted to near two thouſand, or that he pitied the ignorance and ſimplicity of the multitude, or favoured them on account of their inoffenſive behaviour, or was pleaſed that they had never, during their inſurrection, diſputed his title, and had ſhewn no attachment to the houſe of York, the moſt capital crime of which, in his eyes, they could have been guilty.

THE Scottiſh King was not idle during theſe commotions in England. He levied a conſiderable army, and ſat down before the caſtle of Norham in Northumberland; but found that place, by the precaution of Fox, biſhop of Durham, ſo well provided both in men and ammunition, that he made little or no progreſs in the ſiege. Hearing that the earl of Surry had collected ſome forces and was advancing upon him, he retreated backwards into his own country, and left the frontiers expoſed to the inroads of the Engliſh general, who beſieged and took Aiton, a ſmall caſtle lying a few miles beyond Berwic. Theſe unſucceſsful or frivolous attempts on both ſides, prognoſticated a ſpeedy end to the war; and Henry, notwithſtanding his ſuperior force, was no leſs deſirous than James of terminating the differences between the nations. Not to depart, however, from his dignity, by making the firſt advances towards peace, he employed in this friendly office Peter Hialas, a man of addreſs and learning, who had come to him as ambaſſador from Ferdinand and Iſabella, and who was charged with a commiſſion of negotiating the marriage of the infanta Catherine,

Catherine, their daughter, with Arthur prince of Wales [f]. CHAP. XXVI.

HIALAS took a journey northwards, and offered his mediation between James and Henry, as miniſter of a prince, who was in alliance with both potentates. Commiſſioners were ſoon appointed to meet, and confer on the terms of accommodation. The firſt demand of the Engliſh was, that Perkin ſhould be put into their hands; but James replied, that he himſelf was no judge of Perkin's pretenſions, but having received him as a ſupplicant, and promiſed him protection, he was determined not to betray a man, whatever he was, who had truſted to his good faith and his generoſity. The next demand of the Engliſh met with no better reception: They required reparation for the ravages committed by the late inroads into England: The Scots commiſſioners replied, that the ſpoils were like water ſpilt upon the ground, which could never be recovered, and that Henry's ſubjects were better able to bear the loſs, than their maſter's to repair it. Henry's commiſſioners next propoſed, that the two Kings ſhould have an interview at Newcaſtle, in order to adjuſt all differences; but James ſaid, that he meant to treat of a peace, not to go a begging for it. Leſt the conferences ſhould break off altogether without effect, a truce was concluded for ſome months; and James perceiving, that while Perkin remained in Scotland, he never ſhould enjoy a ſolid peace with Henry, privately deſired him to depart the kingdom. 1497. Truce with Scotland.

ACCESS was now barred Perkin into the Low Countries; his uſual retreat in all his diſappointments. The Flemiſh merchants, who felt ſeverely the loſs reſulting

[f] Polydore Virgil, p. 603.

from

CHAP. XXVI.

1497. from their want of commerce with England, had made ſuch intereſt in the arch-duke's council, that commiſſioners were ſent to London, in order to treat of an accommodation. The Flemiſh court agreed that all Engliſh rebels ſhould be excluded the Low Countries; and in this prohibition the demeſnes of the dutcheſs-dowager were expreſly comprehended. When this principal article was agreed to, all the other terms were eaſily adjuſted. A treaty of commerce was finiſhed, which was favourable to the Flemings, and to which they gave long the appellation of *Intercurſus magnus*, the great treaty. And when the Engliſh merchants returned to their uſual abode at Antwerp, they were publicly received, as in proceſſion, with great joy and feſtivity.

PERKIN was a Fleming by deſcent, tho' born in England; and it might therefore be doubted, whether he was comprehended in the treaty between the two nations: But as he muſt diſmiſs all his Engliſh retainers if he took ſhelter in the Low Countries, and as he was ſure of a cold reception, if not bad uſage, among a people who were determined to keep on terms of friendſhip with the court of England; he thought fit rather to hide himſelf, during ſome time, in the wilds and faſtneſſes of Ireland. Impatient however of a retreat, which was both diſagreeable and dangerous, he held conſultations with his followers, Herne, Skelton, and Aſtley, three broken tradeſmen; and by their advice, he reſolved to try the affections of the Corniſh, whoſe mutinous diſpoſition, notwithſtanding the King's lenity, ſtill ſubſiſted, after the ſuppreſſion of their rebellion. No ſooner did he appear at Bodmin in Cornwal, than the populace, to the number of three thouſand men, flocked to his ſtandard; and Perkin, elated with this appearance of ſucceſs, took on him, for the firſt time, the appellation of Richard the fourth, King of England. Not to ſuffer the expectations

pectations of his followers to languiſh, he preſented himſelf before Exeter; and by many fair promiſes, invited that city to join his cauſe. Finding that the inhabitants ſhut their gates againſt him, he laid ſiege to the place; but being unprovided of artillery, ammunition, and of every thing requiſite for that attempt, he made no progreſs in his undertaking. Meſſengers were ſent to the King, informing him of this inſurrection; and the citizens of Exeter meanwhile were determined to hold out to the laſt extremity, in expectation of receiving ſuccour from the known vigilance of that monarch. CHAP. XXVI. 1497.

WHEN Henry was informed, that Perkin was landed in England, he expreſſed great joy, and prepared himſelf with alacrity to attack him, in hopes of being able, at laſt, to put a period to a pretenſion, which had ſo long given him vexation and inquietude. All the courtiers, ſenſible that their activity on this occaſion would be the moſt acceptable ſervice which they could render the King, prepared themſelves for the enterprize, and forwarded his preparations. The lords Daubeney, and Broke, with Sir Rice ap Thomas, haſtened forward with a ſmall body of troops to the relief of Exeter. The earl of Devonſhire, and the moſt conſiderable gentlemen in the county of that name, took arms of their own accord, and marched to join the King's generals. The duke of Buckingham put himſelf at the head of a troop of young nobility and gentry, who ſerved as voluntiers, and who longed for an opportunity of diſplaying their courage and their loyalty. The King himſelf prepared to follow with a conſiderable army; and thus all England ſeemed united againſt a pretender, who had at firſt engaged their attention and divided their affections.

PERKIN, informed of theſe great preparations, immediately broke up the ſiege of Exeter, and retired to Taunton.

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Taunton. Tho' his followers now amounted to the number of near ſeven thouſand men, and ſeemed ſtill reſolute to defend his cauſe, he himſelf deſpaired of ſucceſs, and ſecretly withdrew to the ſanctuary of Beaulieu in the new foreſt. The Corniſh rebels ſubmitted themſelves to the King's mercy, and found that it was not yet exhauſted in their behalf. Except a few perſons of deſperate fortunes, who were executed, and ſome others who were ſeverely fined, all the reſt were diſmiſt with impunity. The Lady Catherine Gordon, wife to Perkin, fell into the conqueror's hands, and was treated with a generoſity, which does him honour. He ſoothed her mind with many tokens of regard, placed her in a reputable ſtation about the Queen, and aſſigned her a penſion, which ſhe enjoyed even under his ſucceſſor.

HENRY next deliberated what courſe to take with Perkin himſelf. Some counſelled him to make the privileges of the church yield to reaſons of ſtate, to take him by violence from the ſanctuary, to inflict on him the puniſhment due to his temerity, and thus at once to put an end to an impoſture which had long diſturbed the government, and which the credulity of the people and the artifices of malecontents were ſtill capable of reviving. But the King deemed not the matter of ſuch importance as to merit ſo violent a remedy. He employed ſome perſons to deal with Perkin, and perſuade him, under promiſe of pardon, to deliver himſelf into the King's hands [s]. The King conducted him in a ſpecies of mock triumph to London. As Perkin paſſed along the road, and through the ſtreets of that city, men of all ranks flocked about him, and the populace treated with the higheſt deriſion his fallen fortunes. They ſeemed deſirous of revenging themſelves by their inſults for the ſhame which

Perkin taken priſoner.

[s] Polydore Virgil, p. 606.

their

their former belief of his impoſtures had thrown upon them. Tho' the eyes of the nation were generally opened with regard to Perkin's real parentage and ſtation, Henry thought proper to require of him a confeſſion of his life and adventures; and he ordered the account of the whole to be publiſhed ſoon after for the ſatisfaction of the public. But as his regard to decency made him ſuppreſs entirely the ſhare which the dutcheſs of Burgundy had had in contriving and conducting the impoſture, the people, who knew that ſhe had been the chief inſtrument in the whole affair, were inclined, on account of the ſilence on that head, to pay the leſs credit to the authenticity of the narrative. CHAP. XXVI. 1498.

But Perkin, tho' his life was granted him, was ſtill detained in cuſtody; and keepers were appointed to guard him. Impatient of confinement, he broke looſe from his keepers, and flying to the ſanctuary of Shyne, put himſelf into the hands of the prior of that monaſtery. The prior had obtained great credit by his character of ſanctity; and he prevailed with the King again to grant a pardon to Perkin. But in order to reduce him to ſtill greater contempt, he was ſet in the ſtocks at Weſtminſter and Cheapſide, and obliged in both places to read aloud to the people the confeſſion which had been formerly publiſhed in his name. He was then thrown into the Tower, where his habits of reſtleſs intrigue and enterprize ſtill followed him. He inſinuated himſelf into the intimacy of four ſervants of Sir John Digby, lieutenant of the Tower; and by their means, opened a correſpondence with the earl of Warwic, who was confined to the ſame priſon. That unfortunate prince, who had from his earlieſt infancy been ſhut up from the commerce of men, and who was ignorant even of the moſt common affairs of life, had fallen into a ſimplicity which 1499.

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1499. made him ſuſceptible of any impreſſions. The continued dread alſo of the more violent effects of Henry's tyranny, joined to the natural love of liberty, engaged him to embrace a project for his eſcape, by the murder of the lieutenant; and Perkin offered to conduct the whole enterprize. The conſpiracy eſcaped not the King's vigilance: It was even very generally believed, that the ſcheme was laid by himſelf, in order to draw Perkin and Warwic into the ſnare: But the ſubſequent execution of two of Digby's ſervants for the contrivance, ſeems to clear the King of that imputation, which was indeed founded more on the general idea entertained of his character, than on any poſitive evidence.

Perkin executed.

PERKIN, by this new attempt, after ſo many enormities, had rendered himſelf totally unworthy of mercy; and he was accordingly arraigned, condemned, and ſoon after hanged at Tyburn, perſiſting ſtill in the confeſſion of his impoſture [z]. It happened about that very time, that

[z] Stowe, Baker, Speed, Biondi, Hollingſhed, Bacon. Some late writers have been ſo whimſical as to doubt, whether Perkin was an impoſtor, and even to aſſert him to be the real Richard Plantagenet, duke of York. But to refute this fancy, we need but reflect on the few following particulars. 1. Had not the Queen-mother, and the other heads of the York party, been fully aſſured of the death of both the young princes, would they have agreed to call over the earl of Richmond, the head of the Lancaſtrian party, and marry him to the princeſs Elizabeth? 2. The ſtory told conſtantly by Perkin of his eſcape is utterly incredible, that thoſe who were ſent to murder his brother took pity on him, and granted him his liberty. 3. What became of him during the courſe of ſeven years, from his ſuppoſed death till his appearance in Ireland in 1491? Why was not the Queen-mother, the dutcheſs of Burgundy, and the other friends of the family applied to, during that time, for his ſupport and education? 4. Tho' the dutcheſs of Burgundy at laſt acknowledged him for her nephew, ſhe had loſt all pretence to authority by her former acknowledgment and ſupport of Lambert

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that one Wilford, a cordwainer's ſon, encouraged by the ſurpriſing credit which had been given to other impoſtures, had undertaken to perſonate the earl of Warwic; and a prieſt had even ventured from the pulpit to recommend his cauſe to the people, who ſeemed ſtill to retain a propenſity to adopt it. This incident ſerved Henry as an apology for his ſeverity towards that unfortunate prince. He was brought to trial, and accuſed, not of contriving his eſcape, (for as he was committed for no crime, the deſire of liberty muſt have been regarded as natural and innocent) but of forming deſigns to diſturb the government, and raiſe an inſurrection among the people. Warwic confeſſed the indictment, was condemned, and the ſentence was executed upon him.

The earl of Warwic executed. 21ſt of November.

THIS violent tyranny, the great ſtain of Henry's reign, by which he deſtroyed the laſt remaining male of the line of Plantagenet, begot great diſcontent among the people, who ſaw an unhappy prince, that had long been denied all the privileges of his high birth, even cut off from the common benefits of nature, now at laſt deprived of life itſelf, merely for reſiſting that oppreſſion

bert Simnel, an avowed impoſtor. It is remarkable, that Mr. Carte, in order to preſerve the weight of the dutcheſs's teſtimony, in favour of Perkin, ſuppreſſes entirely this material fact. A remarkable effect of party prejudices, and the author's deſire of blackening Henry the Seventh, whoſe hereditary title to the crown was defective. 5. Perkin himſelf confeſſed his impoſture more than once, and read his confeſſion before the whole people. It is pretended that this confeſſion was drawn from him by torture; but no ancient hiſtorian gives any ground for this ſurmiſe. 6. He renewed his confeſſion at the foot of the gibbet on which he was executed. 7. After Henry the Eighth's acceſſion the titles of the houſe of York and Lancaſter were fully confounded, and there was no longer any neceſſity for defending Henry the Seventh and his title; yet all the hiſtorians of that time, when the events were recent, ſome of theſe hiſtorians too, ſuch as Sir Thomas More, of the higheſt authority, agree in treating Perkin as an impoſtor.

CHAP. XXVI. 1499. under which he laboured. In vain did Henry endeavour to alleviate the odium of this guilt, by ſharing it with his ally, Ferdinand of Arragon, who, he ſaid, had ſcrupled to give his daughter Catherine in marriage to Arthur, while any prince of the houſe of York remained alive. Men, on the contrary, felt higher indignation at ſeeing a young prince ſacrificed, not to law and juſtice, but to the jealous politics of two ſubtile and crafty tyrants.

But tho' theſe diſcontents feſtered in the minds of men, they were ſo checked by Henry's watchful policy and ſteady ſeverity, that they ſeemed not to weaken his government; and foreign princes, deeming his throne now entirely ſecure, paid him rather the greater courtſhip and attention. The archduke Philip, in particular, deſired an interview with the King; and this monarch, who had paſſed over to Calais, agreed to meet him at St. Peter's church near that city. The archduke, on his approaching the King, made haſte to alight, and offered to hold Henry's ſtirrup; a mark of condeſcenſion, which that prince would not admit of. He called the King *father*, *patron*, *protector*; and by his whole behaviour expreſſed a ſtrong deſire of conciliating the friendſhip of England. The duke of Orleans had ſucceeded to the kingdom of France under the appellation of Lewis the Twelfth; and having carried his arms into Italy, and ſubdued the dutchy of Milan, his progreſs begot jealouſy in Maximilian, Philip's father, as well as in Ferdinand, his father-in-law. By the council, therefore, of theſe monarchs, the young prince endeavoured by every art to acquire the amity of Henry, whom they regarded as the chief counterpoize to the greatneſs of France. No particular plan however of alliance ſeems to have been concerted between theſe two princes in their interview:

All

All paſſed in general profeſſions of affection and regard; at leaſt, in remote projects of a cloſer union, by the future intermarriages of their children, who were then in a ſtate of infancy. CHAP. XXVI. 1499.

THE pope too, Alexander the Sixth, neglected not the friendſhip of a monarch, whoſe reputation was ſpread over all Europe. He ſent a nuntio to England, who exhorted the King to take part in the great alliance projected for the recovery of the Holy Land, and to lead in perſon his forces againſt the Turk. The general frenzy for cruſades was now entirely exhauſted in Europe; but it was ſtill thought a neceſſary piece of decency to pretend zeal for thoſe pious enterprizes. Henry regretted the diſtance of his ſituation, which rendered it inconvenient for him to expoſe his perſon in defence of the Chriſtian cauſe. He promiſed, however, his utmoſt aſſiſtance by aids and contributions; and rather than the pope ſhould go alone to the holy wars, unaccompanied by any monarch, he even promiſed to overlook all other conſiderations, and to attend him in perſon. He only required as a neceſſary condition, that all differences ſhould be previouſly compoſed among Chriſtian princes, and that ſome ſea-port towns in Italy ſhould be put into his hands for his retreat and ſecurity. It was eaſy to conclude from this anſwer, that Henry had determined with himſelf not to intermeddle in any wars againſt the Turk: But as a great name, without any real aſſiſtance, is ſometimes of ſervice, the knights of Rhodes, who were at that time eſteemed the bulwark of Chriſtendom, choſe the King protector of their order. 1500.

BUT the prince, whoſe alliance Henry valued the moſt, was that of Ferdinand of Arragon, whoſe vigorous and ſteady policy, always attended with ſucceſs, had

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1500. rendered him in many reſpects, the moſt conſiderable monarch in Europe. There was alſo a remarkable ſimilarity of character between theſe two princes: Both were full of craft, intrigue, and deſign; and tho' a reſemblance of this nature be a ſlender foundation of confidence and friendſhip, where the intereſts of the parties in the leaſt interfere; yet ſuch was the ſituation of Henry and Ferdinand, that no jealouſy ever on any occaſion aroſe between them. The King had now the ſatisfaction of compleating a marriage, which had been projected and negotiated during the courſe of ſeven years, between Arthur prince of Wales and the infanta Catherine, fourth daughter of Ferdinand and Iſabella; he near ſixteen years of age, ſhe eighteen. But this marriage proved in the iſſue unproſperous. The young prince, a few months after, ſickened and died, very much regreted by the whole nation. Henry, deſirous to continue his alliance with Spain, and alſo unwilling to reſtore Catherine's dowry, which was two hundred thouſand ducats, obliged his ſecond ſon, Henry, whom he created prince of Wales, to be contracted to the princeſs. The prince made all the oppoſition which a youth of twelve years of age was capable of; but as the King perſiſted in his reſolution, the eſpouſals were at laſt, by means of the pope's diſpenſation, concluded between the parties: An event, which was afterwards attended with the moſt important conſequences.

1501. Marriage of prince Arthur with Catherine of Arragon. 12th of November.

2d of April. His death 1502.

Marriage of the princeſs Margaret with the King of Scotland.

THE ſame year, another marriage was concluded, which was alſo, in the next age, productive of great events: The marriage of Margaret, the King's eldeſt daughter, with James King of Scotland. This alliance had been negotiated during three years, tho' interrupted by ſeveral broils; and Henry hoped, from the completion of it, to remove all ſource of diſcord with that neigh-

neighbouring kingdom, by whoſe animoſity England had been ſo often infeſted. When this marriage was deliberated on in the Engliſh council, ſome objected, that England might, by means of that alliance, fall under the dominion of Scotland. "No;" replied Henry, "Scotland, in that event, would only become an acceſſion to England." Amidſt theſe proſperous events, the King met with a domeſtic calamity, which made not ſuch impreſſion on him as it merited. His queen died in child-bed; and the infant lived not long after. This princeſs was deſervedly a great favourite of the nation; and the general affection for her encreaſed, on account of the harſh treatment, which, it was thought, ſhe met with from her conſort. CHAP. XXVI. 1502. 1503. 11th of February.

THE ſituation of the King's affairs, both at home and abroad, was now, in every reſpect, very fortunate. All the efforts of the European princes, both in war and negotiation, were turned to the ſide of Italy; and the various events, which there aroſe, made Henry's alliance be courted by every party, and yet intereſted him ſo little as never to touch him with concern or anxiety. His cloſe connexions with Spain and Scotland enſured his tranquillity; and his continued ſucceſſes over domeſtic enemies, owing to the prudence and vigour of his conduct, had reduced the people to entire ſubmiſſion and obedience. Henry therefore, uncontrouled by apprehenſion or oppoſition of any kind, gave full ſcope to his natural propenſity; and avarice, which had ever been his predominant paſſion, being encreaſed by age, and encouraged by abſolute authority, broke all reſtraints of ſhame or juſtice. He had found two miniſters, Empſon and Dudley, perfectly qualified to ſecond his rapacious and tyrannical inclinations, and to prey upon his defenceleſs people. Theſe inſtruments of oppreſ- Oppreſſions of the people.

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1503.

fion were both lawyers, the firſt of mean birth, of brutal manners, of an unrelenting temper; the ſecond better born, better educated, and better bred, but equally unjuſt, ſevere, and inflexible. By their knowledge in the law, theſe men were qualified to pervert the forms of juſtice to the oppreſſion of the innocent; and the formidable authority of the King ſupported them in all their iniquities.

It was their uſual practice at firſt to obſerve ſo far the appearance of law as to give indictments to thoſe whom they intended to oppreſs: Upon which the perſons were committed to priſon, but never brought to trial; and were at laſt obliged to recover their liberty, by paying heavy fines and ranſoms, which were called mitigations and compoſitions. By degrees, the very appearance of law was neglected: They ſent forth their precepts to attach men, and ſummon them before themſelves and ſome others, at their private houſes, in a court of commiſſion, where, in a ſummary manner, without trial or jury, arbitrary decrees were iſſued, both in pleas of the crown and controverſies between private parties. Juries themſelves, when ſummoned, proved but ſmall ſecurity to the ſubject; being brow-beat by theſe oppreſſors; nay, fined, impriſoned, and puniſhed, if they gave ſentence againſt the inclination of the miniſters. The whole ſyſtem of the feudal law, which ſtill prevailed, was turned into a ſcheme of oppreſſion. Even the King's wards, after they came to full age, were not ſuffered to enter in poſſeſſion of their lands without paying exorbitant fines. Men were alſo haraſſed with informations of intruſion upon ſcarce colourable titles. When an outlawry in a perſonal action was iſſued againſt any man, he was not allowed to purchaſe his charter of pardon,

pardon, except on the payment of a great ſum; and if he refuſed the compoſition required of him, the ſtrict law, which, in ſuch caſes, allows forfeiture of goods, was rigorouſly inſiſted on. Nay, without any colour of law, the half of men's lands and rents were ſeized during two years, as a penalty in caſe of outlawry. But the chief inſtruments of oppreſſion, employed by theſe miniſters, were the penal ſtatutes, which, without conſideration of rank, quality, or ſervices, were rigidly put in execution againſt all men: Spies, informers, and inquiſitors were rewarded and encouraged in every corner of the kingdom: And no difference was made whether the ſtatute was beneficial or hurtful, recent or obſolete, poſſible or impoſſible to be executed. The ſole end of the King and his miniſters was to amaſs money, and bring every one under the laſh of their authority [a].

CHAP. XXVI. 1503.

THRO' the prevalence of ſuch an arbitrary and iniquitous adminiſtration, the Engliſh, it may ſafely be affirmed, were conſiderable loſers by the ancient privilege, which ſecured them from all taxations and impoſitions, except ſuch as were levied by their own conſent. Had the King been empowered to lay on general taxes at pleaſure, he would naturally have abſtained from theſe oppreſſive expedients, which deſtroyed all ſecurity in private property, and begot an univerſal diffidence thro' the nation. In vain did the people look for protection from the parliament, which was pretty frequently ſummoned during this reign. That aſſembly was ſo overawed, that, at this very time, during the greateſt rage of Henry's oppreſſions, the commons choſe Dudley their ſpeaker, the very man who was the chief inſtru-

1504. 25th Jan. A Parliament.

[a] Bacon, 629, 630. Hollingſhed, p. 504. Polyd. Virg. p. 613. 615.

ment

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ment of his oppreſſions. And tho' the King was known to be immenſely opulent, and had no pretence of wars or expenſive enterprizes of any kind, they granted him the ſubſidy, which he demanded. But ſo inſatiable was his avarice, that next year he levied a new benevolence, and renewed that arbitrary and oppreſſive method of taxation. By all theſe arts of accumulation, joined to a rigid frugality in his expence, he ſo filled his coffers, that he is ſaid to have poſſeſſed in ready money the ſum of 1,800,000 pounds: An incredible treaſure, if we conſider the ſcarcity of money in thoſe days [b].

1504.

1505.

But while Henry was enriching himſelf with the ſpoils of his oppreſſed people, there happened an event abroad, which engaged his attention, and was even the object of his anxiety and concern. Iſabella, queen of Caſtile, died about this time; and it was foreſeen, that by this incident the fortunes of Ferdinand, her huſband, would be much affected. The King was not only attentive to the fate of his ally, and watchful leſt the general ſyſtem of Europe ſhould be affected by ſo important an event: He alſo conſidered the ſimilarity of his own ſituation with that of Ferdinand, and regarded the iſſue of theſe tranſactions as a precedent for himſelf. Joan, the daughter of Ferdinand by Iſabella, was married to the archduke Philip, and being, in right of her mother, heireſs of Caſtile, ſeemed entitled to diſpute with Ferdinand the preſent adminiſtration of that king-

[b] Silver was during this reign at 37 ſhillings and ſixpence a pound, which makes Henry's treaſure above 2,750,000 pounds ſterling. Beſides, many commodities have become thrice as dear by the encreaſe of gold and ſilver in Europe. And what is a circumſtance of ſtill greater weight, all other ſtates were then very poor, in compariſon of what they are at preſent: Theſe circumſtances make Henry's treaſure appear very great; and may lead us to conceive the oppreſſions of his government.

dom. Henry knew, that, notwithſtanding his own pre- CHAP. XXVI.
tenſions by the houſe of Lancaſter, the greateſt part of
the nation were convinced of the ſuperiority of his wife's 1505.
title; and he dreaded leſt the prince, who was daily advancing towards manhood, might be tempted by ambition to lay immediate claim to the throne. By his perpetual attention to depreſs the partizans of the York family, he had more cloſely united them into one party, and encreaſed their deſire of ſhaking off that yoke, under which they had ſo long laboured, and of taking every advantage, which his oppreſſive government ſhould give his enemies againſt him. And as he poſſeſſed no independent force like Ferdinand, and governed a kingdom more turbulent and unruly, which he himſelf, by his narrow politics, had confirmed in factious prejudices; he apprehended that his ſituation would prove in the iſſue ſtill more precarious.

NOTHING could turn out more contrary to the King's inclinations than the tranſactions in Spain. Ferdinand had become very unpopular in Caſtile, chiefly by reaſon of his former exactions and impoſitions; and the ſtates of the kingdom diſcovered an evident reſolution of preferring the title of Philip and Joan. In order to take 1506.
advantage of theſe favourable diſpoſitions, the archduke, now King of Caſtile, attended by his conſort, embarked for Spain during the winter ſeaſon; and meeting with a violent tempeſt in the channel, was obliged to take ſhelter in the harbour of Weymouth. Sir John Trenchard, A rival of the King of Caſtile.
a gentleman of authority in the county of Dorſet, hearing of a fleet upon the coaſt, had aſſembled ſome forces; and being joined by Sir John Cary, who was alſo at the head of an armed body, he came to that town. Finding, that Philip, in order to relieve his ſickneſs and fatigue, was already come aſhore, he invited him to his houſe; and

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and immediately dispatched an express to inform the court of this important incident. The King sent in all haste the earl of Arundel to compliment the archduke on his arrival in England, and to inform him, that he intended to pay him a visit in person, and to give him a suitable reception in his kingdom. Philip knew, that he could not now depart without the King's consent; and therefore, for the sake of dispatch, he resolved to anticipate his visit, and to have an interview with him at Windsor. Henry received him with all the magnificence possible, and with all the seeming cordiality; but he resolved, notwithstanding, to extract some advantage from this involuntary visit, payed him by his royal guest.

Intrigues of the earl of Suffolk.

EDMOND de la Pole, earl of Suffolk, nephew to Edward the fourth, and brother to the earl of Lincoln, slain at the battle of Stoke, had some years before killed a man in a sudden fit of passion, and had been obliged to apply to the King for a remission of his crime. The King had granted his request; but being little indulgent to all persons connected with the house of York, he obliged him to appear openly in court and plead his pardon. Suffolk more resenting the affront, than grateful for the favour, had fled into Flanders, and taken shelter with his aunt, the dutchess of Burgundy: But being promised forgiveness by the King, he returned into England, and obtained a new pardon. Actuated, however, by the natural inquietude of his temper, and uneasy from debts which he had contracted by his expences at prince Arthur's marriage, he again made an elopement into Flanders. The King, well acquainted with the general discontent which prevailed against his administration, neglected not this incident, which might become of importance; and he employed his usual artifices to elude

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the efforts of his enemies. He directed Sir Robert Curſon, governor of the caſtle of Hammes, to fly from his charge, and to inſinuate himſelf into the confidence of Suffolk, by making him a tender of his ſervices. Upon information ſecretly conveyed by Curſon, the King ſeized William Courtney, earl of Devonſhire, his brother in law, married to the lady Catherine, daughter of Edward the fourth; William de la Pole, brother to the earl of Suffolk; Sir James Tirrel, and Sir James Windham, with ſome perſons of inferior quality; and he committed them all to cuſtody. The lord Abergavenny and Sir Thomas Green were alſo apprehended; but were ſoon after freed from their confinement. William de la Pole was detained in priſon during a long time: And the earl of Devonſhire recovered not his freedom during the King's life. But Henry's chief ſeverity fell upon Sir James Windham, and Sir James Tirrel, who were both brought to their trial, condemned, and executed: The fate of the latter gave univerſal ſatisfaction, on account of his participation in the murder of the young princes, ſons to Edward the fourth. Notwithſtanding theſe diſcoveries and executions, Curſon was ſtill able to maintain his credit with the earl of Suffolk; and Henry, in order to remove all ſuſpicions, had ordered him to be excommunicated, together with Suffolk himſelf, for his pretended rebellion. But after that traitor had performed all the ſervices expected from him, he ſuddenly deſerted the earl, and came over to England, where the King received him with unuſual marks of favour and confidence. Suffolk, aſtoniſhed at this inſtance of perfidy, finding that even the dutcheſs of Burgundy, tired with ſo many fruitleſs attempts, had become indifferent to his cauſe, fled ſecretly into France, thence into Germany, and returned at laſt into the Low Countries; where he

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was

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was protected, tho' not countenanced, by the archduke Philip, then in close alliance with the King.

1506. HENRY neglected not the present opportunity of complaining to Philip of the reception, which Suffolk had met with in his dominions. "I really thought," replied the King of Castile, "that your greatness and "felicity had set you far above apprehensions from any "person of so little consequence: But to give you sa-"tisfaction, I shall banish him my state." "I expect, "that you will carry your complaisance farther," said the King: "I desire to have Suffolk put into my hands, "where alone I can depend upon his submission and "obedience." "That measure," said Philip, "will "reflect dishonour upon you as well as myself. You "will be thought to have used me as a prisoner." "Then "the matter is at an end," replied the King, "for I "will take that dishonour upon me; and so your ho-"nour is saved [a]." The King of Castile found himself under a necessity of complying; but he first exacted Henry's promise that he would spare Suffolk's life. That nobleman was invited over to England by Philip; as if the King would grant him a pardon, by the intercession of his friend and ally. Upon his appearance, he was committed to the Tower; and the King of Castile, having fully satisfied Henry, as well by this concession, as by signing a treaty of commerce between England and Castile, which was advantageous to the former kingdom [b], was at last allowed to depart, after a stay of three months. He landed in Spain, was joyfully received by the Castilians, and put in possession of the throne. He died soon after; and Joan, his widow, falling into deep melancholy, Ferdinand was again enabled to re-instate

1507.

[a] Bacon, p. 633.

[b] Rymer, vol. xiii. p. 142.

himself

himſelf in his authority, and to govern, till the day of his death, the whole Spaniſh monarchy. CHAP. XXVI.

THE King ſurvived theſe tranſactions two years; but little memorable occurs in the remaining part of his reign, except his affiancing his ſecond daughter Mary with the young archduke Charles, ſon of Philip of Caſtile. He entertained alſo ſome intention of marriage for himſelf, firſt with the Queen-dowager of Naples, relict of Ferdinand; afterwards with the dutcheſs-dowager of Savoy, daughter of Maximilian, and ſiſter of Philip. But the decline of his health put an end to all ſuch thoughts; and he began to caſt his eye towards that future exiſtence, which the iniquities and ſeverities of his reign rendered a very diſmal proſpect to him. To allay the terrors, under which he laboured, he endeavoured, by diſtributing alms and founding religious houſes, to make atonement for his crimes, and to purchaſe, by the ſacrifice of part of his ill-gotten treaſures, a reconciliation with his offended Maker. Remorſe even ſeized him at intervals for the abuſes of his authority by Empſon and Dudley; but not ſufficient to make him ſtop the rapacious hands of thoſe oppreſſors. Sir William Capel was again fined two thouſand pounds under ſome frivolous pretences, and was committed to the Tower for daring to murmur againſt that iniquity. Harris, an alderman of London, was indicted, and died of vexation before his trial came to an iſſue. Sir Lawrence Ailmer, who had been mayor, and his two ſheriffs, were condemned in heavy fines, and ſent to priſon till they made payment. The King gave countenance to all theſe oppreſſions; till death, by its nearer approaches, impreſſed new terrors upon him; and he then ordered, by a general clauſe in his will, that reſtitution ſhould be made to all thoſe whom he had injured. He died of a con-

1507.

1508.

Sickneſs of the King.

1509. His death 22d April.

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consumption at his favourite palace of Richmond, after a reign of twenty-three years and eight months, and in the fifty-second year of his age [c].

And character.

THE reign of Henry the seventh was, in the main, fortunate for his people at home, and honourable abroad. He put an end to the civil wars with which the nation had been long harrassed, he maintained peace and order in the state, he depressed the former exorbitant power of the nobility, and, together with the friendship of some foreign princes, he acquired the consideration and regard of all. He loved peace without fearing war; tho' agitated with continual suspicions of his servants and ministers, he discovered no timidity either in the conduct of his affairs, or in the day of battle; and tho' often severe in his punishments, he was commonly less actuated by revenge than by the maxims of policy. The services, which he rendered the people, were derived from his views of private interest, rather than the motives of public spirit; and where he deviated from selfish regards, it was unknown to himself, and ever from the malignant prejudices of faction, or the mean projects of avarice; not from the sallies of passion, or allurements of pleasure; still less, from the benign motives of friendship and generosity. His capacity was excellent, but somewhat contracted by the narrowness of his heart; he possessed insinuation and address, but never employed these talents, except where some great point of interest was to be gained; and while he neglected to conciliate the affections of his people, he often felt the danger of resting his authority on their fear and reverence alone. He was always extremely attentive to his affairs. But possessed not the faculty of seeing far into futurity; and was more expert

[c] Dugd. baronage II. p. 237.

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at providing a remedy for his miſtakes than judicious in avoiding them. Avarice was on the whole his ruling paſſion [d]; and he remains an inſtance, almoſt ſingular, of a man, placed in a high ſtation, and poſſeſſed of talents for great affairs, in whom that paſſion predominated above ambition. Even among private perſons, avarice is commonly nothing but a ſpecies of ambition, and is chiefly incited by the proſpect of that regard, diſtinction and conſideration which attend on riches.

THE power of the Kings of England had always been ſomewhat irregular or diſcretionary; but was ſcarce ever ſo abſolute during any former reign, at leaſt after the eſtabliſhment of the great charter, as during that of Henry. Beſides the perſonal character of the man, full of vigour, induſtry, and ſeverity, deliberate in all projects, ſteady in every purpoſe, and attended with caution, as well as good fortune, in each enterprize; he came to the throne after long and bloody civil wars, which had deſtroyed all the great nobility, who alone could reſiſt the encroachments of his authority: The people were tired with diſcord and inteſtine convulſions, and willing to ſubmit to uſurpations, and even to injuries, rather than plunge themſelves anew into like miſeries: The fruitleſs efforts made againſt him ſerved always, as is uſual, to confirm his authority: As he ruled by a faction, and the leſſer faction, all thoſe on whom he conferred offices, ſenſible that they owed every thing

[d] As a proof of Henry's attention to the ſmalleſt profits, Bacon tells us, that he had ſeen a book of accompts kept by Empſon, and ſubſcribed in almoſt every leaf by the King's own hand. Among other articles was the following. "*Item*, Received of ſuch a one five marks "for a pardon, which, if it do not paſs, the money to be repayed, or "the party otherwiſe ſatisfied." Oppoſite to this memorandum, the King had wrote with his own hand, "otherwiſe ſatisfied." Bacon, p. 630.

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to his protection, were content to ſupport his power, tho' at the expence of juſtice and national privileges. Theſe ſeem the chief cauſes which at this time beſtowed on the crown ſo conſiderable an addition of prerogative, and rendered the preſent reign a kind of epoch in the Engliſh conſtitution.

THIS prince, tho' he exalted his own prerogative above law, is celebrated by his hiſtorian for many good laws, which he cauſed to be enacted for the government of his ſubjects. Several conſiderable regulations, indeed, are found among the ſtatutes of this reign, both with regard to the police of the kingdom, and its commerce: But the former are generally contrived with much better judgment than the latter. The more ſimple ideas of order and equity are ſufficient to guide a legiſlator in every thing that regards the internal adminiſtration of juſtice: But the principles of commerce are much more complicated, and require long experience and deep reflection to be well underſtood in any ſtate. The real conſequence of a law or practice is there often contrary to firſt appearances. No wonder, that during the reign of Henry the ſeventh, theſe matters were often miſunderſtood; and it may ſafely be affirmed, that even in the age of lord Bacon, very imperfect and erroneous ideas were formed on that ſubject.

His laws.

EARLY in Henry's reign, the authority of the Star Chamber, which was before founded on common law, and very antient practice, was in ſome caſes confirmed by act of parliament [e]: Lord Bacon extols the uſe of this court; but men began, during the age of that hiſtorian, to feel that ſo arbitrary a juriſdiction was totally incompatible with liberty; and in proportion as the ſpirit

[e] Rot. Parl. 3 H. 7. n. 17.

of

of independance roſe ſtill higher in the nation, the averſion againſt it increaſed, till it was entirely aboliſhed by act of parliament in the reign of Charles the firſt, a little before the commencement of the civil wars. CHAP. XXVI. 1509.

LAWS were paſſed in this reign, ordering the King's ſuit for murder to be carried on within a year and day [f]. Formerly, it did not uſually commence till after that term; and as the friends of the perſon murdered, in the interval often compounded matters with the criminal, that crime very frequently paſſed unpuniſhed. Suits were given to the poor *in forma pauperis*, as it is called: That is, without paying dues for the writs, or any fees to the council [g]: A good law at all times, eſpecially in that age, when the people laboured under the oppreſſion of the great; but a law very difficult to be reduced to execution. A law was made againſt carrying off any woman by force [h]. The benefit of clergy was abridged [i], and the criminal, on the firſt offence, was ordered to be burned in the hand with a letter marking his crime; after which he was puniſhed capitally for any new offence. This law was much too indulgent, yet was in thoſe days regarded as a violation of the rights of the church. Sheriffs were no longer allowed to fine any perſon, without previouſly ſummoning him before their court [k]. It is ſtrange, that ſuch a practice ſhould ever have prevailed. Attaint of juries was granted in caſes which exceeded forty pounds value [l]. A law which has an appearance of equity, but which was afterwards found inconvenient. Actions popular were not allowed to be eluded by fraud or covin. If any ſervant of the King conſpired againſt the life of the ſteward, treaſurer,

[f] 3 H. 7. cap. 1. [g] 11 H. 7. cap. 12. [h] 3 H. 7. cap. 2. [i] 4 H. 7. cap. 13. [k] 11 H. 7. cap. 15. [l] Ibid. cap. 24. 19 H. 7. cap. 3.

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or comptroller of the King's houſhold, this deſign, tho' not followed by any act, was made liable to the puniſhment of felony [m]. This ſtatute was procured by the jealouſy of archbiſhop Morton, who found himſelf expoſed to the enmity of great numbers.

THERE ſcarce paſſed any ſeſſion during this reign without ſome ſtatute againſt engaging retainers, and giving them badges or liveries [n]; a practice, by which they were, in a manner, inliſted under ſome great lord, and were kept in readineſs to aſſiſt him in all wars, inſurrections, riots, violences, and even in bearing evidence for him in courts of juſtice [o]. This diſorder, which had ariſen during turbulent times, when the law could give little protection to the ſubject, was then deeply rooted in England; and it required all the vigilance and rigour of Henry to extirpate it. There is a ſtory of his ſeverity againſt that abuſe; which ſeems to merit praiſe, tho' it is commonly cited as an inſtance of his avarice and rapacity. The earl of Oxford, his favourite general, in whom he always placed great and deſerved truſt, having ſplendidly entertained him at his caſtle of Heningham, was deſirous of making a ſhow of his magnificence at the departure of his royal gueſt; and ordered all his retainers, with their liveries and badges, to be drawn up in two lines, that their appearance might be more gallant and ſplendid. "My lord," ſaid the King, "I have "heard much of your hoſpitality; but the truth far ex- "ceeds the report. Theſe handſome gentlemen and "yeomen, whom I ſee on both ſides of me, are, no "doubt, your menial ſervants." The earl ſmiled, and confeſſed that his fortune was too narrow for ſuch

[m] 3 H. 7. cap. 13. cap. 3. 19 H. 7. cap. 14. cap. 25.

[n] Ibid. cap. 1. & 12. 11 H. 7.

[o] 3 H. 7. cap. 12. 11 H. 7.

magnificence. "They are moſt of them," ſubjoined he, "my retainers, who are come to do me ſervice at "ſuch a time, when they knew I was honoured with "your majeſty's preſence." The King ſtarted a little, and ſaid, "By my faith, my lord, I thank you for my "good cheer, but I muſt not allow my laws to be brok-"en in my ſight. My attorney muſt ſpeak with you." Oxford is ſaid to have payed no leſs than fifteen thouſand marks, as a compoſition for his offence. CHAP. XXVI. 1509.

THE encreaſe of the arts, more effectually than all the ſeverities of laws, put an end to this pernicious practice. The nobility, inſtead of vying with each other, in the number and boldneſs of their retainers, acquired by degrees a more civilized ſpecies of emulation, and endeavoured to excel in the ſplendour and elegance of their equipage, houſes, and tables. The common people, no longer maintained in a vicious idleneſs by their ſuperiors, were obliged to learn ſome calling or induſtry, and became uſeful both to themſelves and others. And it muſt be acknowledged, in ſpite of thoſe who declaim ſo violently againſt the refinement of the arts, or what they are pleaſed to call luxury, that, as much as an induſtrious tradeſman is both a better man and a better citizen than one of thoſe idle retainers, who formerly depended on the great families; ſo much is the life of a modern nobleman more laudable than that of an antient baron.

BUT the moſt important law in its conſequences, which was enacted during the reign of Henry, was that by which the nobility and gentry acquired a power of breaking the antient entails, and of alienating their eſtates [p]. By means of this law, joined to the beginning luxury

[p] 4 H. 7. cap. 24. The practice of breaking entails by means of a fine and recovery was introduced in the reign of Edward the 4th: But

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luxury and refinements of the age, the great fortunes of the barons were gradually diſſipated, and the property of the commons encreaſed in England. It is probable, that Henry foreſaw and intended this conſequence; becauſe the conſtant ſcheme of his policy conſiſted in depreſſing the great, and exalting churchmen, lawyers, and men of new families, who were more dependant on him.

THIS King's love of money naturally led him to encourage commerce, which encreaſed his cuſtoms; but, if we may judge by moſt of the laws enacted during his reign, trade and induſtry were rather hurt than promoted by the care and attention which were given to them. Severe laws were made againſt taking intereſt for money, which was then denominated uſury [q]. Even the profits of exchange were prohibited, as ſavouring of uſury [r], which the ſuperſtition of that age zealouſly proſcribed. All evaſive contracts, by which profits could be made from the loan of money, were alſo carefully guarded againſt [s]. It is needleſs to obſerve how unreaſonable and iniquitous theſe laws, how impoſſible to be executed, and how hurtful to trade, if they could take place. We may obſerve, however, to the praiſe of this King, that ſometimes, in order to promote commerce, he lent to merchants ſums of money, without intereſt; when he knew, that their ſtock was not ſufficient for thoſe enterprizes, which they had in view [t].

LAWS were made againſt the exportation of money, plate, or bullion [u]; A precaution, which ſerves to no

it was not, properly ſpeaking, law, till the ſtatute of Henry the 7th; which, by correcting ſome abuſes that attended that practice, gave indirectly a ſanction to it.

[q] 3 H. 7. cap. 5. [r] Ibid. cap. 6. [s] 7 H. 7. cap. 8.
[t] Polyd. Virg. [u] 4 H. 7. cap. 23.

other

other purpoſe than to make more be exported. But ſo far was the anxiety on this head carried, that merchant aliens, who imported commodities into the kingdom, were obliged to inveſt, in Engliſh commodities, all the money acquired by their ſales, in order to prevent their conveying it away in a clandeſtine manner [x].

HORSES were forbid to be exported; as if that exportation did not encourage the breed, and render them more plentiful in the kingdom [y]. To promote archery, no bows were to be ſold at a higher price than ſix ſhillings and four-pence [z], reducing money to the denomination of our time. The only effect of this regulation muſt be either that the people would be ſupplied with bad bows or none at all. Prices were alſo affixed to woollen cloath [a], to caps and hats [b]: And labourers wages were regulated by law [c]. It is evident, that theſe circumſtances ought always to be left free, and be truſted to the common courſe of buſineſs and commerce. To ſome it may appear ſurprizing, that the price of a yard of ſcarlet cloth ſhould be limited to ſix and twenty ſhillings, that of a yard of coloured cloth to eighteen; higher prices than theſe commodities bear at preſent: And that the wages of a tradeſman, ſuch as a maſon, bricklayer, tyler, &c. ſhould be regulated at near ten-pence a day; which is not much inferior to the preſent wages given in ſome places of England. Labour and commodities have certainly riſen very much ſince the diſcovery of the Weſt-Indies; but not ſo much in every particular as is generally imagined. The greater induſtry of the preſent times has encreaſed the number of tradeſmen and labourers, ſo as to keep wages nearer a par than could be expected

[x] 3 H. 7. cap. 8. [y] 11 H. 7. cap. 13. [z] 3 H. 7. cap. 12. [a] 4 H. 7. cap. 8. [b] Ibid. cap. 9. [c] 11 H. 7. cap. 22.

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1509. from the great encreaſe of gold and ſilver. And the additional art employed in the finer manufactures, has even made ſome of theſe commodities fall below their former value. Not to mention, that merchants and dealers, being contented with leſs profit than formerly, afford the goods cheaper to their cuſtomers. It appears by a ſtatute of this reign [d], that goods bought for ſixteen pence would ſometimes be ſold by the merchants for three ſhillings. The commodities, whoſe price has chiefly riſen, are butchers meat, fowl, and fiſh, (eſpecially the latter) which cannot be much augmented in quantity by the encreaſe of art and induſtry. The profeſſion which then abounded moſt, and was embraced by perſons of the loweſt rank, was the church: By a clauſe of a ſtatute, all clerks or ſtudents of the univerſity were forbid to beg, without a permiſſion from the vice-chancellor [e].

ONE great cauſe of the low ſtate of induſtry during this period, was the reſtraints put upon it; and the parliament, or rather the King, (for he was the prime mover in every thing) enlarged a little ſome of theſe limitations; but not to the degree that was requiſite. A law had been enacted during the reign of Henry the fourth [f], that no man could bind his ſon or daughter to an apprenticeſhip, unleſs he was poſſeſſed of twenty ſhillings a year in land; and Henry the ſeventh, becauſe the decay of manufactures was complained of in Norwich from the want of hands, exempted that city from the penalties of this law [g]. Afterwards, the whole county of Norfolk obtained a like exemption with regard to ſome branches of the woollen manufacture [h]. Theſe abſurd

[d] 4 H. 7. cap. 9. [e] 11 H. 7. cap. 22. [f] 7 H. 7. cap. 17. [g] 11 H. 7. cap. 11. [h] 12 H. 7. cap. 1.

limita-

limitations proceeded from a deſire of promoting huſbandry, which however is never more effectually encouraged than by the encreaſe of manufactures. For a like reaſon, the law enacted againſt incloſures, and for the keeping up farm houſes [i], ſcarce deſerves the high praiſes beſtowed on it by lord Bacon. If huſbandmen underſtood agriculture, and have a ready vent for their commodities, we need never dread a diminution of the people, employed in the country. All methods of ſupporting populouſneſs, except by the intereſt of the proprietors, are violent and ineffectual. During a century and a half after this period, there was a continual renewal of laws and edicts againſt depopulation; whence we may infer, that none of them were ever executed. The natural courſe of improvement at laſt provided a remedy.

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One great check to induſtry in England was the erecting corporations; an abuſe which is not yet entirely corrected. A law was enacted, that corporations ſhould not paſs any by-laws without the conſent of three of the chief officers of ſtate [k]. They were prohibited to impoſe tolls at their gates [l]. The cities of Gloceſter and Worceſter had even impoſed tolls on the Severne, which were aboliſhed [m].

There is a law of this reign [n], containing a preamble, from which it appears, that the company of merchant adventurers in London, had, by their own authority, debarred all the other merchants of the kingdom, from trading to the great marts in the Low Countries, unleſs each trader previouſly payed them the ſum of near ſeventy pounds. It is ſurpriſing that ſuch a by-law (if it deſerves that name) could ever be carried into

[i] 4 H. 7. cap. 19. [k] 19 H. 7. cap. 7. [l] Ibid. cap. 8. [m] Ibid. cap. 18. [n] 12 H. 7. cap. 6.

execu-

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execution, and that the authority of parliament ſhould be requiſite to abrogate it.

1509. It was during this reign, on the ſecond of Auguſt 1492, a little before ſun-ſet, that Chriſtopher Columbus, a Florentine, ſet out from Cadiz on his memorable voyage for the diſcovery of the weſtern world; and a few years after, Vaſquez de Gama, a Portugueſe, paſſed the Cape of Good Hope, and opened a new paſſage to the Eaſt Indies. Theſe great events were attended with the moſt important conſequences to all the nations of Europe, even to ſuch as were not immediately concerned in thoſe naval enterprizes. The enlargement of commerce and navigation encreaſed induſtry and the arts every where: The nobles diſſipated their fortunes in expenſive pleaſures: Men of an inferior rank both acquired a ſhare in the landed property, and created to themſelves a conſiderable property of a new kind, in ſtock, commodities, art, credit, and correſpondence. In ſome nations the privileges of the commons encreaſed, by this encreaſe of property: In moſt nations, the Kings, finding arms to be dropt by the barons, who could no longer endure their former rude manner of life, eſtabliſhed ſtanding armies, and maſtered the liberties of the kingdom: But in all places, the condition of the people, from the depreſſion of the petty tyrants, by whom they had formerly been oppreſſed, rather than governed, received great improvement, and they acquired, if not entire liberty, at leaſt the moſt conſiderable advantages of it. And as the general courſe of events thus tended to depreſs the nobles and exalt the people, Henry the ſeventh, who alſo embraced that ſyſtem of policy, has acquired more praiſe, than his inſtitutions, ſtrictly ſpeaking, ſeem of themſelves to deſerve, on account of any profound wiſdom attending them.

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CHAP. XXVI. 1509.

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But though this improvement of navigation, and the diſcovery of both the Indies, was the moſt memorable incident that happened during this or any other period, it was not the only great event by which the age was diſtinguiſhed. In 1453, Conſtantinople was taken by the Turks; and the Greeks, among whom ſome remains

[o] Rymer, vol. xiii. p. 37. [p] Stowe, p. 484.

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of learning were ſtill preſerved, being ſcattered by theſe Barbarians, took ſhelter in Italy, and imported, together with their admirable language, a tincture of their ſcience and their refined taſte in poetry and eloquence. About the ſame time, the purity of the Latin tongue was revived, the ſtudy of antiquity became faſhionable, and the eſteem for literature gradually propagated itſelf throughout every nation of Europe. The art of printing, invented about that time, facilitated extremely the progreſs of all theſe improvements: The invention of gunpowder changed the whole art of war: Mighty innovations were ſoon after made in religion, ſuch as not only affected thoſe ſtates that embraced them, but even thoſe that adhered to the antient faith and worſhip: And thus a general revolution was made in human affairs throughout this part of the world; and men gradually attained that ſituation, with regard to commerce, arts, ſciences, government, police, and cultivation, in which they have ever ſince perſevered. Here therefore commences the uſeful, as well as the moſt agreeable part of modern annals; certainty has place in all the conſiderable, and even moſt of the minute parts of hiſtorical narration; a great variety of events, preſerved by printing, give the author the power of ſelecting, as well as adorning, the facts, which he relates; and as each incident has a reference to our preſent manners and ſituation, inſtructive leſſons occur every moment during the courſe of the narration. Whoever carries his anxious reſearches into preceding periods is moved by a curioſity, liberal indeed and commendable; not by any neceſſity for acquiring a knowledge of public affairs, or the arts of civil government.

HEN-

HENRY VIII.

CHAP. XXVII.

Popularity of the new King.——His miniſters.——Puniſhment of Empſon and Dudley.——King's marriage.——Foreign affairs.——Julius the Second.——League of Cambray.——War with France.——Expedition to Fontarabia.——Deceit of Ferdinand.——Return of the Engliſh.——Leo the Tenth.——A Parliament.——War with Scotland.——Wolſey miniſter.——His character. Invaſion of France.——Battle of Guinegate.——Battle of Flouden.——Peace with France.

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THE death of Henry the Seventh had been attended with as open and viſible a joy among the people as decency would permit; and the acceſſion and coronation of his ſon, Henry the Eighth, ſpread univerſally a declared and unfeigned ſatisfaction. Inſtead of a monarch, jealous, ſevere, and avaritious, who, in proportion as he advanced in years, was ſinking ſtill deeper in thoſe unpopular vices; a young prince of eighteen had ſucceeded to the throne, who, even in the eyes of men of ſenſe, gave very promiſing hopes of his future conduct, much more in thoſe of the people, always enchanted with novelty, youth, and royal dignity. The beauty and vigour of his perſon, accompanied with dexterity in every manly exerciſe, was farther adorned with a blooming and ruddy countenance, with a lively air, with the appearance

Popularity of the new King.

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pearance of ſpirit and activity in all his demeanour [a]. His father, in order to remove him from the knowledge of public buſineſs, had hitherto occupied him entirely in the ſtudy of literature; and the proficiency, which he made, gave no bad prognoſtic of his parts and capacity [b]. Even the vices of vehemence, ardour, and impatience, to which he was ſubject, and which afterwards degenerated into tyranny, were conſidered only as faults, incident to unguarded youth, which would be corrected, when time had brought him to greater moderation and maturity. And as the contending titles of York and Lancaſter were now at laſt fully united in his perſon, men juſtly expected from a prince, obnoxious to no party, that impartiality of adminiſtration, which had ſo long been unknown in England.

THE favourable prepoſſeſſions of the public were encouraged by the meaſures, which Henry embraced in the commencement of his reign. His grandmother, the counteſs of Richmond and Derby, was ſtill alive; and as ſhe was a woman much celebrated for prudence and virtue, he very wiſely ſhewed great deference to her opinion in the eſtabliſhment of his new council. The members were Warham, archbiſhop of Canterbury, and chancellor; the earl of Shrewſbury, ſteward; lord Herbert, chamberlain; Sir Thomas Lovel, maſter of the wards and conſtable of the Tower; Sir Edward Poynings, knight of the garter, comptroller; Sir Henry Marney, afterwards lord Marney; Sir Thomas Darcy, afterwards lord Darcy; Thomas Ruthal, doctor of laws; and Sir Henry Wyat [c]. Theſe men had long been accuſtomed to buſineſs under the late King, and

His miniſters.

[a] T. Mori, Lucubr. p. 182.
Father Paul, lib. 1.
[c] Herbert, Stowe, p. 486. Hollingſhed, p. 799.

were the leaſt unpopular of all the miniſters employed by that monarch. CHAP. XXVII.

1509.

But the chief competitors for favour and authority under the new King were the earl of Surrey, treaſurer, and Fox, biſhop of Wincheſter, ſecretary and privy ſeal. This prelate, who enjoyed great credit during all the former reign, had acquired ſuch habits of caution and frugality as he could not eaſily lay aſide; and he ſtill oppoſed, by his remonſtrances, thoſe ſchemes of diſſipation and expence, which the youth and paſſions of Henry rendered agreeable to him. But Surrey was a more dexterous courtier; and tho' few had borne a greater ſhare in the frugal politics of the laſt King, he knew how to conform himſelf to the humours of his new maſter; and no one was ſo forward in promoting that liberality, pleaſure, and magnificence, which began to prevail under the young monarch [d]. By this policy he ingratiated himſelf with Henry; he made profit, as well as the other courtiers, of the laviſh diſpoſition of his maſter; and he engaged him in ſuch a courſe of play and idleneſs as rendered him negligent of affairs, and willing to entruſt the government of the ſtate entirely into the hands of his miniſters. The immenſe treaſures, amaſſed by the late King, were gradually diſſipated in the giddy expences of Henry. One party of pleaſure ſucceeded to another: Tilts, tournaments and carouſals were exhibited with all the magnificence of that age: And as the preſent tranquillity of the public permitted the court to indulge itſelf in every amuſement, ſerious buſineſs was but little attended to. Or if the King intermitted the courſe of his feſtivity, he employed himſelf chiefly in an application to muſic and literature, which were his favourite

[d] Lord Herbert.

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purſuits, and which were well adapted to his genius. He had made ſuch proficiency in the former art, as even to compoſe ſome pieces of church-muſic which were ſung in his chapel [e]. He was initiated in the elegant learning of the ancients. And tho' he was ſo unfortunate as to be ſeduced into a ſtudy of the barren controverſies of the ſchools, which were then faſhionable, and had choſen Thomas Aquinas for his favourite author, he ſtill diſcovered a capacity fitted for more uſeful and entertaining knowledge.

THE frank and careleſs humour of the King, as it led him to diſſipate the treaſures, amaſſed by his father, rendered him negligent in protecting the inſtruments, whom that prince had employed in his extortions. A proclamation being iſſued to encourage complaints, the rage of the people was let looſe on all the informers, who had ſo long exerciſed an unbounded tyranny over the nation [f]: They were thrown into priſon, condemned to the pillory, and moſt of them loſt their lives by the violence of the populace. Empſon and Dudley, who were moſt expoſed to public hatred, were immediately cited before the council, in order to anſwer for their conduct, which had rendered them ſo obnoxious. Empſon made a ſhrewd apology for himſelf, as well as for his aſſociate. He told the council, that ſo far from his being juſtly obnoxious to cenſure for his paſt conduct, his enemies themſelves grounded their clamour on actions, which ſeemed rather to merit reward and approbation: That a ſtrict execution of law was the crime, of which he and Dudley were accuſed; tho' that law

Puniſhment of Empſon and Dudley.

[e] Lord Herbert.

[f] Herbert, Stowe, p. 486. Hollingſhed, p. 799. Polyd. Virg. lib. 27.

had

had been eſtabliſhed by the voluntary conſent of the people, and tho' they had acted in obedience to the King, to whom the adminiſtration of juſtice was entruſted by the conſtitution: That it belonged not to them, who were inſtruments in the hands of the ſupreme power, to determine what laws were recent or obſolete, expedient or hurtful; ſince they were all alike valid, ſo long as they remained unrepealed by the legiſlature: That it was natural for a licentious populace to murmur againſt the reſtraints of authority; but all wiſe ſtates had ever made their glory to conſiſt in the juſt diſtribution of reward and puniſhment, and had annexed the former to the obſervance and enforcement of the laws, the latter to their violation and infraction: And that a ſudden overthrow of all government might be expected; where the judges were committed to the mercy of the criminals, the rulers to that of the ſubjects [g]. CHAP. XXVII. 1509.

NOTWITHSTANDING this defence, Empſon and Dudley were ſent to the Tower; and ſoon after brought to their trial. The ſtrict execution of laws, however obſolete, could never be imputed to them as a crime in a court of judicature; and it is likely, that even where they had exerciſed arbitrary power, the King, as they had acted by the ſecret commands of his father, was not willing that their conduct ſhould undergo too ſevere a ſcrutiny. In order, therefore, to gratify the people with the puniſhment of theſe obnoxious miniſters, crimes very improbable, or indeed abſolutely impoſſible, were charged upon them, that they had entered into a conſpiracy againſt the King, and had intended, on the death of the late King, to have ſeized by

[g] Herbert, Hollingſhed, p. 804.

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force the adminiſtration of the government. The jury were ſo far moved by popular prejudices, joined to court influence, as to give a verdict againſt them; which was afterwards confirmed by a bill of attainder in parliament [h], and, at the earneſt deſire of the people, was executed by warrant from the King. Thus, in thoſe arbitrary times, juſtice was equally violated, whether the King ſought power and riches, or courted popularity.

King's marriage.

THE King, while he puniſhed the inſtruments of paſt tyranny, had yet ſuch deference to former engagements as to deliberate, immediately after his acceſſion, concerning the conſummation of his marriage with the infanta Catherine, to whom he was affianced during his father's lifetime. Her former marriage with his brother, and the inequality of their years, were the chief objections, which were urged againſt the eſpouſing her: But on the other hand, the advantages of her known virtue, modeſty, and ſweetneſs of diſpoſition were inſiſted on; the affection which ſhe bore the King; the large dowry to which ſhe was entitled as princeſs of Wales; the intereſt of cementing a cloſe alliance with Spain; the neceſſity of finding ſome confederate to counterbalance the power of France; the expediency of fulfilling the engagements of the late King. When theſe conſiderations were weighed, they determined the council, tho' contrary to the opinion of the primate, to give Henry their

[h] This Parliament met on the 21ſt January, 1510. A law was there enacted, in order to prevent ſome abuſes which had prevailed during the late reign. The forfeiture upon the penal ſtatutes was reduced to the term of three years. Coſts and damages were given againſt informers upon acquittal of the accuſed: More ſevere puniſhments were enacted againſt perjury: The falſe inquiſitions procured by Empſon and Dudley were declared null and invalid. Traverſes were allowed; and the time of tendering them enlarged. 1 H. 8. c. 8. 10, 11, 12.

advice

advice for compleating the marriage; which was done accordingly. The counteſs of Richmond, who had concurred in the ſame ſentiments, died ſoon after the marriage of her grandſon. CHAP. XXVII. 1509. June 3.

THE popularity of Henry's government, his indiſputed title to the throne, his extenſive authority, his large treaſures, the tranquillity of his ſubjects, were circumſtances which rendered his domeſtic adminiſtration eaſy and proſperous: The ſituation of foreign affairs was no leſs happy and deſirable. Italy continued ſtill, as during the late reign, to be the center of all the wars and negotiations of the European princes; and Henry's alliance was courted by both ſides; at the ſame time, that he was not engaged by any immediate intereſt or neceſſity to take part with either. Lewis the Twelfth of France, after the conqueſt of Milan, was the only great prince who poſſeſſed any territory in Italy; and could he have remained in tranquillity, he was enabled by his ſituation to preſcribe laws to all the Italian princes and republics, and to hold the balance among them. But the deſire of making a conqueſt of Naples, to which he had the ſame title or pretenſion with his predeceſſor, ſtill engaged him in new enterprizes; and as he foreſaw oppoſition from Ferdinand, who was connected both by treaties and affinity with Frederic of Naples, he endeavoured, by the offers of intereſt, to which the ears of that monarch were ever open, to engage him in an oppoſite confederacy. He ſettled with him a plan for the partition of the kingdom of Naples and the expulſion of Frederic: A plan, which the politicians of that age regarded as the moſt egregious imprudence in the French monarch, and the baſeſt treachery in the Spaniſh. Frederic, ſupported only by ſubjects, who were either diſcontented with his go- 1510. Foreign affairs.

CHAP. XXVII. 1510.

vernment, or indifferent about his fortunes, was unable to reſiſt ſo powerful a confederacy, and was deprived of his dominions: But he had the ſatisfaction to ſee Naples immediately prove the ſource of contention among his enemies. Ferdinand gave ſecret orders to his general, Gonſalvo, whom the Spaniards honour with the appellation of the *great captain*, to attack the armies of France, and make himſelf maſter of all the dominions of Naples. Gonſalvo prevailed in every enterprize, defeated the French in two pitched battles, and enſured to his prince the entire poſſeſſion of that kingdom. Lewis, unable to procure redreſs by force of arms, was obliged to enter into a fruitleſs negotiation with Ferdinand for the recovery of his ſhare of the partition; and all Italy, during ſome time, was held in ſuſpence between theſe two powerful monarchs.

THERE ſcarce has been any period, when the balance of power was bettter ſecured in Europe, and ſeemed more able to maintain itſelf, without any anxious concern or attention of the princes. Several great monarchies were eſtabliſhed; and no one ſo far ſurpaſſed the reſt as to give any foundation, or even pretence, for jealouſy. England was united in domeſtic peace, and by its ſituation happily ſecured from the invaſion of foreigners. The coalition of the ſeveral kingdoms of Spain, had formed one powerful monarchy, which Ferdinand adminiſtered with arts fraudulent indeed and deceitful, but full of vigour and ability. Lewis the Twelfth of France, a gallant and generous prince, by eſpouſing Anne of Brittany, widow to his predeceſſor, had preſerved the union with that principality, on which the ſafety of his kingdom ſo much depended. Maximilian, the emperor, beſides the hereditary dominions of the Auſtrian family, maintained authority in the empire, and not-

notwithſtanding his levity of diſpoſition, was able to unite the German princes in any great plan of intereſt, at leaſt, of defence. Charles, prince of Caſtile, grandſon to Maximilian and Ferdinand, had already ſucceeded to the rich dominions of the houſe of Burgundy; and being as yet in early youth, the government was entruſted to Margaret of Savoy, his aunt, a princeſs endowed with ſignal prudence and virtue. The internal force of theſe ſeveral powerful ſtates, which balanced each other, might long have maintained general tranquillity, had not the active and enterprizing genius of an ambitious pontiff firſt excited the flames of war and diſcord among them. CHAP. XXVII. 1510.

ALEXANDER the Sixth was dead; a man of a ſingular character, and, excepting his ſon Cæſar Borgia, almoſt the only man we read of in hiſtory, who has joined great capacity with the blackeſt vices and the moſt abandoned profligacy of manners. After a ſhort interval, Julius the Second had ſucceeded to the papal throne, who tho' endowed with many virtues, gave almoſt as much ſcandal to the world as his deteſted predeceſſor. His virtues were deemed unſuitable to his ſtation of ſovereign pontiff, the ſpiritual judge and common father of all Chriſtians. Animated with an unextinguiſhable thirſt of glory, inflexible in his ſchemes, undaunted in his enterprizes, indefatigable in his purſuits; magnanimous, imperious, domineering; his vaſt ſoul broke thro' all the fetters, which old age and a prieſtly character impoſed upon it, and during his pontificate, kept the world in perpetual agitation. By his intrigues, a league had been formed at Cambray [g], between himſelf, Maximilian the emperor, Lewis the Twelfth of France, and Ferdinand of Arragon; and the object of this great con- Julius the Second. League of Cambray.

[g] In 1508.

CHAP. XXVII. 1510.

vernment, or indifferent about his fortunes, was unable to reſiſt ſo powerful a confederacy, and was deprived of his dominions: But he had the ſatisfaction to ſee Naples immediately prove the ſource of contention among his enemies. Ferdinand gave ſecret orders to his general, Gonſalvo, whom the Spaniards honour with the appellation of the *great captain*, to attack the armies of France, and make himſelf maſter of all the dominions of Naples. Gonſalvo prevailed in every enterprize, defeated the French in two pitched battles, and enſured to his prince the entire poſſeſſion of that kingdom. Lewis, unable to procure redreſs by force of arms, was obliged to enter into a fruitleſs negotiation with Ferdinand for the recovery of his ſhare of the partition; and all Italy, during ſome time, was held in ſuſpence between theſe two powerful monarchs.

THERE ſcarce has been any period, when the balance of power was bettter ſecured in Europe, and ſeemed more able to maintain itſelf, without any anxious concern or attention of the princes. Several great monarchies were eſtabliſhed; and no one ſo far ſurpaſſed the reſt as to give any foundation, or even pretence, for jealouſy. England was united in domeſtic peace, and by its ſituation happily ſecured from the invaſion of foreigners. The coalition of the ſeveral kingdoms of Spain, had formed one powerful monarchy, which Ferdinand adminiſtered with arts fraudulent indeed and deceitful, but full of vigour and ability. Lewis the Twelfth of France, a gallant and generous prince, by eſpouſing Anne of Brittany, widow to his predeceſſor, had preſerved the union with that principality, on which the ſafety of his kingdom ſo much depended. Maximilian, the emperor, beſides the hereditary dominions of the Auſtrian family, maintained authority in the empire, and not-

notwithſtanding his levity of diſpoſition, was able to unite the German princes in any great plan of intereſt, at leaſt, of defence. Charles, prince of Caſtile, grandſon to Maximilian and Ferdinand, had already ſucceeded to the rich dominions of the houſe of Burgundy; and being as yet in early youth, the government was entruſted to Margaret of Savoy, his aunt, a princeſs endowed with ſignal prudence and virtue. The internal force of theſe ſeveral powerful ſtates, which balanced each other, might long have maintained general tranquillity, had not the active and enterprizing genius of an ambitious pontiff firſt excited the flames of war and diſcord among them. CHAP. XXVII. 1510.

ALEXANDER the Sixth was dead; a man of a ſingular character, and, excepting his ſon Cæſar Borgia, almoſt the only man we read of in hiſtory, who has joined great capacity with the blackeſt vices and the moſt abandoned profligacy of manners. After a ſhort interval, Julius the Second had ſucceeded to the papal throne, who tho' endowed with many virtues, gave almoſt as much ſcandal to the world as his deteſted predeceſſor. His virtues were deemed unſuitable to his ſtation of ſovereign pontiff, the ſpiritual judge and common father of all Chriſtians. Animated with an unextinguiſhable thirſt of glory, inflexible in his ſchemes, undaunted in his enterprizes, indefatigable in his purſuits; magnanimous, imperious, domineering; his vaſt ſoul broke thro' all the fetters, which old age and a prieſtly character impoſed upon it, and during his pontificate, kept the world in perpetual agitation. By his intrigues, a league had been formed at Cambray [g], between himſelf, Maximilian the emperor, Lewis the Twelfth of France, and Ferdinand of Arragon; and the object of this great con- Julius the Second. League of Cambray.

[g] In 1508.

CHAP. XXVII.

federacy was to overwhelm, by their united arms, the commonwealth of Venice.

1510. THIS illuſtrious commonwealth, the great bulwark of Europe againſt the barbarians, and the admired model of civil polity, had riſen to a conſiderable power, and began to make a figure, which during that age bore ſome proportion to that of the great monarchies. Her riches ſurpaſſed thoſe of any European city, her finances were great, her commerce extenſive, her naval power formidable, her armies numerous and well ſupplied. Truſting only to her own power, ſhe had neglected to maintain a cordial friendſhip with any other ſtate; and by the endleſs political ſuſpicions, which ſhe entertained even of her beſt allies, ſhe had taught them to regard her progreſs with like jealouſy. No ſtate could reaſonably complain of any injuſtice and uſurpations in her meaſures: But as great monarchs never ſee without diſpleaſure a republic nearly on a a level with themſelves, it was eaſy for Julius, by his negotiations among the European princes, to compleat his ſcheme of a confederacy againſt her. Ferdinand deſired to wreſt from the Venetians ſome towns on the coaſt of Naples, which his predeceſſor had voluntarily, for money, conſigned into their hand: Lewis propoſed to recover a part of the territory of Milan, which he himſelf had delivered to them by treaty: Maximilian laid claim to great part of their dominions, which they had acquired from petty princes or tyrants, that had formerly, as he pretended, in ſome diſtant period, uſurped them from the empire: The pope, from like pretences, challenged another part of their dominions, as the patrimony of the church. In order to cover the ſcheme of this confederacy, the cardinal d'Amboiſe, prime miniſter of France, had met at Cambray with Margaret

Margaret of Savoy, under colour of accommodating a difference between her and the duke of Guelders; and it was there, that the alliance againſt Venice was ſecretly ſigned by the contracting powers, and all the meaſures of operation concerted [b]. CHAP. XXVII. 1510.

THE Venetians were appriſed of their danger, and prepared themſelves for reſiſtance. They provided every means of defence, except the moſt eſſential, brave and warlike forces, which it is impoſſible to raiſe, where the ideas of military glory are extinguiſhed, and men have, from long habit, acquired other objects of ambition. They ſent into the field an army of 40,000 men under experienced leaders, the count of Pitigliano and Bartholomew Alviano; and hoped, that ſo great a force would ſecure them from the invaſion of Lewis, who had led an army into Italy, and firſt took the field againſt them. But the martial nobility of France, headed by their gallant ſovereign, utterly diſcomfitted theſe enervated forces; and in the action of Ghierradadda, the power and glory of Venice, the reſult of conſummate wiſdom, and the work of ages, ſuffered in one day a check, which it has never yet been able thoroughly to recover [c]. Diſmayed with this loſs, the Venetians took a haſty reſolution of abandoning all their dominions on the continent of Italy; and they accordingly withdrew their garriſons from every place, and freed their ſubjects from their oaths of allegiance. Lewis immediately put himſelf in poſſeſſion of Cremona, Bergamo, Breſcia, Creme, and all the places which had been diſmembered from the Milaneſe. Even Verona, Padua, Vicenza, and other towns, which, by the treaty of Cambray, fell

[b] Guicciardini, lib. 8. Bembo.

[c] Seiſſel. hiſt. Louis XII. St. Gela i t. Guicciard. lib. 8.

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1510. under the partition of Maximilian, offered to open their gates to the French monarch. Had Maximilian, inſtead of waſting his time at Trent, led his forces early into Italy, an end had been put for ever to the power and dominion of Venice. But Lewis, well acquainted with the fickleneſs and inconſtancy of that prince, was determined to give him no pretext for deſerting his alliance; and therefore ordered the magiſtrates of thoſe towns to make their ſubmiſſions to the emperor, whom, he told them, they were now to regard as their lawful ſovereign [d]. The Venetian ſenate, obſerving thoſe delays, and remarking the extreme regret, which their ſubjects diſcovered on loſing the mild and equitable government of the republic [e], began again to aſſume courage, and reinſtated themſelves in the dominion of thoſe cities, which they had abandoned. From this time, their prudence and ſound policy gave a check to the malignity of their fortune and the ſuperiority of their enemies. They voluntarily made a ſacrifice to Ferdinand of thoſe towns, which he laid claim to, and thereby detached him from the alliance [f]. They gratified the ambition of the Pope by a like ſacrifice; and farther flattered his vanity by the loweſt obeiſance and the moſt dutiful ſubmiſſions [g]. After trying like arts with Maximilian, and finding his pretenſions to be utterly exorbitant, they rouzed their patriot ſpirit, and prepared themſelves for reſiſtance, with a courage, which, tho' ill ſeconded by the unwarlike genius of their people, might have done honour to the Roman ſenate during the moſt flouriſhing period of the republic.

THE great force and ſecure ſituation of the conſiderable monarchies, prevented any one of them from aſpir-

[d] Buonacorſi, Petrus de Angleria, epiſt. 418.

[e] Guicciard. lib. 8. [f] Petrus de Angleria. [g] Bembo.

ing

ing to any conqueſt of moment; and tho' this conſideration could not maintain general peace, or remedy the natural inquietude of men, it rendered the princes of this age more eaſy in deſerting engagements and changing their alliances, in which they were retained more by humour and caprice than by any natural or durable intereſt. Julius had no ſooner humbled the Venetian republic, than he was inſpired with a nobler ambition, that of expelling all foreigners from Italy, or, to ſpeak in the ſtile affected by the Italians of that age, the freeing that country entirely from the dominion of the Barbarians [a]. He was determined to make the tempeſt fall firſt upon Lewis; and in order to pave the way for this great enterprize, he at once ſought for a ground of quarrel with that monarch, and courted the alliance of other princes. He declared war againſt the duke of Ferrara, the confederate of Lewis. He ſolicited the favour of England, by ſending Henry a ſacred roſe, perfumed with muſk and anointed with chriſm [b]. He engaged in his intereſt Bambridge archbiſhop of York, and Henry's ambaſſador at Rome, whom he ſoon after created cardinal. He drew over Ferdinand to his ſide, tho' that monarch, at firſt, made no declaration of his intentions. And what he chiefly valued, he framed a treaty with the Swiſs cantons, who, enraged by ſome neglects put upon them by Lewis, accompanied with contumelious expreſſions, had deſerted the alliance of France, and waited an opportunity of revenging themſelves on that nation.

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Lewis was determined not to abandon the duke of Ferrara, who ſuffered merely for his attachment to the crown of France. Chaumont, his lieutenant in the Milaneſe, received orders to defend him againſt Julius,

[a] Guicciard. lib. 8. [b] Spelman, Concil. vol. ii. p. 725.

who

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who, ſupported by his own dauntleſs ſpirit, and confiding in the ſacredneſs of his character, had ſet his enemy at defiance. By a happy and unexpected movement, Chaumont ſurrounded the pope and all his court in Bologna; and had he not allowed himſelf to be amuſed by a treaty, which his profound reſpect for the holy father made him the more willing to hearken to, he had been able, without any bloodſhed, to have reduced him to captivity. Finding himſelf expoſed to ſevere cenſure for not puſhing his advantages, he was agitated with ſuch violent regret, that he fell into a languiſhing illneſs, of which he ſoon after died; tho' oppoſite remorſes took place on his death-bed, and he very humbly craved of his holineſs a remiſſion of his grievous ſin, in having at all born arms againſt him [c].

1510.

1511. WHILE the French monarch repelled the attacks of his enemies, he thought it alſo requiſite to make an attack on the pope himſelf, and to deſpoil him, as much as poſſible, of that ſacred character, which chiefly rendered him formidable. He engaged ſome cardinals, diſguſted with the violence of Julius, to deſert him; and by their authority, he was determined, in conjunction with Maximilian, who ſtill adhered to his alliance, to call a general council, which might reform the church, and check the exorbitancies of the Roman pontiff. A council was ſummoned at Piſa, which from the beginning bore a very inauſpicious aſpect, and promiſed little ſucceſs to its adherents. Except a few French biſhops, who unwillingly obeyed their King's orders in attending the council, all the other prelates kept at a diſtance from an aſſembly, which they regarded as the offſpring of faction, intrigue, and worldly politics. Even Piſa,

[c] L'abbé du Bos, Hiſtoire de la Ligue de Cambray.

the

the place of their reſidence, ſhowed them ſigns of contempt; which engaged them to transfer their ſeſſion to Milan, a town under the dominion of the French monarch. Notwithſtanding this advantage, they did not experience much more reſpectful treatment from the inhabitants of Milan; and found it neceſſary to make another remove to Lyons [d]. Lewis himſelf fortified theſe violent prejudices in favour of the papal authority, by the ſymptoms, which he diſcovered, of regard, deference, and ſubmiſſion to Julius, whom he always ſpared, even when fortune had thrown into his hands the moſt inviting opportunities of humbling him. And as it was known, that his conſort, who had great authority with him, was extremely diſquieted in mind, on account of his diſſentions with the holy father, all men prognoſticated to Julius final ſucceſs in this unequal conteſt.

CHAP. XXVII. 1511.

THAT enterprizing pope knew his advantages, and availed himſelf of them with the utmoſt temerity and inſolence. So much had he neglected his pontifical character, that he aſſiſted in perſon at the ſiege of Mirandola, viſited the trenches, ſaw ſome of his attendants killed by his ſide, and, like a young ſoldier, chearfully bore all the rigours of winter and a ſevere ſeaſon, in purſuit of military glory [e]: Yet was he ſtill able to throw, even on his moſt moderate opponents, the charge of impiety and prophaneneſs. He ſummoned a council at the Lateran: He put Piſa under an interdict, and all the places which gave ſhelter to the ſchiſmatical council: He excommunicated the cardinals and prelates who attended it: He even directed his ſpiritual thunders againſt the princes who adhered to it: He freed their ſubjects from all oaths of allegiance, and gave their dominions to every one, who could take poſſeſſion of them.

[d] Guicciardini, lib. 10. [e] Ibid. lib. 9.

FER-

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1512.

FERDINAND of Arragon, who had acquired the ſirname of the Catholic, regarded the cauſe of the pope and of religion only as a cover to his ambition and ſelfiſh politics: Henry, naturally ſincere and ſanguine in his temper, and the more ſo on account of his youth and inexperience, was moved with a hearty deſire of protecting the pope from that oppreſſion, to which he believed him expoſed from the ambitious enterprizes of Lewis. Hopes had been given him by Julius, that the title of the *moſt Chriſtian King*, which had hitherto been annexed to the crown of France, and which was regarded as its moſt precious ornament, would, in reward of his ſervices, be transferred to that of England [f]. Impatient alſo of acquiring that diſtinction in Europe, to which his power and opulence entitled him, he could not long remain neuter amidſt the noiſe of arms; and the natural enmity of the Engliſh againſt France, as well as their antient claims upon that kingdom, led Henry to join that alliance which the pope, Spain, and Venice had formed againſt the French monarch. A herald was ſent to Paris, to exhort Lewis not to wage impious war againſt the pope; and when he returned without ſucceſs, another was ſent to make a demand of the antient patrimonial provinces, Anjou, Maine, Guienne, and Normandy. This meſſage was underſtood as a declaration of war; and a parliament, being ſummoned, readily granted ſupplies for a purpoſe ſo much favoured by the Engliſh nation [g].

War with France. 4th of February.

BUONAVISO, an agent of the pope at London, had been corrupted by the court of France, and had previouſly revealed to Lewis all the meaſures which Henry was concerting againſt him. But this infidelity did the

[f] Guicciard. lib. xi. P. Daniel, vol. ii. p. 1893. Herbert, Holingſhed, p. 831.

[g] Herbert. Holingſhed, p. 811.

King inconſiderable prejudice, in compariſon of what he experienced from the ſelfiſh purpoſes of the ally, to whom he chiefly truſted for aſſiſtance. Ferdinand, his father-in-law, had ſo long perſevered in a courſe of crooked politics, that he began even to value himſelf on his dexterity in fraud and artifice; and he made a boaſt of thoſe ſhameful ſucceſſes. Being told one day, that Lewis the twelfth, a prince of a very different character, had complained that he had once cheated him: "He lies, "the drunkard!" ſaid he, "I have cheated him above "twenty times." This prince conſidered his cloſe connexion with Henry, only as the means which enabled him the better to take advantage of his want of experience. He adviſed him not to invade France by the way of Calais, where he himſelf ſhould not have it in his power to aſſiſt him: He exhorted him rather to ſend forces to Fontarabia, whence he could eaſily make a conqueſt of Guienne, a province, in which, it was imagined, the Engliſh had ſtill ſome adherents. He promiſed to aſſiſt this conqueſt by the junction of a Spaniſh army. And ſo forward did he ſeem to promote the intereſt of his ſon-in-law, that he even ſent veſſels into England, to tranſport over the forces which Henry had levied for that purpoſe. The marquis of Dorſet commanded theſe troops, which conſiſted of ten thouſand men, moſtly infantry; the lord Howard, ſon to the earl of Surry, the lord Broke, lord Ferrars, and many others of the young gentry and nobility, accompanied him in this ſervice. All were on fire to diſtinguiſh themſelves by military atchievements, and to make a conqueſt of importance for their maſter. The ſecret purpoſe of Ferdinand in this unexampled generoſity was ſuſpected by no body.

CHAP. XXVII. 1512.

Expedition to Fontarabia.

THE ſmall kingdom of Navarre lies on the frontiers between France and Spain; and as John d'Albert, the preſent

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1512.

preſent King, was connected in friendſhip and alliance with Lewis, the opportunity ſeemed favourable to Ferdinand, while the Engliſh forces were conjoined with his own, and while all adherents to the council of Piſa lay under the ſentence of excommunication, to put himſelf in poſſeſſion of theſe dominions. No ſooner, therefore, was Dorſet landed in Guipiſcoa, than the Spaniſh monarch declared his readineſs to join him with his forces, to make jointly an invaſion of France, and to form the ſiege of Bayonne, which opened the way into Guienne [b]. But he remarked to the Engliſh general how dangerous it might prove to leave behind them the kingdom of Navarre, which, being in cloſe alliance with France, could eaſily give admittance to the enemy, and cut off all communication between Spain and the combined armies. To provide againſt ſo dangerous an event, he required, that John ſhould ſtipulate a neutrality in the preſent war; and when that prince expreſſed his willingneſs to enter into any engagement for that purpoſe, he alſo required that he ſhould give ſecurity for his ſtrict obſervance of it. John having likewiſe agreed to this condition, Ferdinand demanded, that he ſhould deliver into his hands ſix of the moſt conſiderable places of his dominions, together with his eldeſt ſon as a hoſtage. Theſe were not conditions to be propoſed to a ſovereign; and as the Spaniſh monarch expected a refuſal, he gave immediate orders to the duke of Alva, his general, to make an invaſion of Navarre, and to reduce the whole kingdom to ſubjection. Alva ſoon made himſelf maſter of all the ſmaller towns; and being ready to form the ſiege of Pampeluna, the capital, he ſummoned the marquis of Dorſet to join him with the Engliſh army, and to concert together all their operations.

[b] Herbert. Hollingſhed, p. 813.

DORSET

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DORSET began to ſuſpect, that his maſter's intereſts were very little regarded in all theſe tranſactions; and having no orders to invade the kingdom of Navarre, or make war any where but in France, he refuſed to take any part in that enterprize. He remained therefore in his quarters at Fontarabia; but ſo politic was the contrivance of Ferdinand, that even while the Engliſh army lay in that ſituation, it was almoſt equally ſerviceable to his purpoſes, as if it had acted in conjunction with his own. It kept the French army in awe, and prevented it from advancing to ſuccour the kingdom of Navarre; ſo that Alva, having full leiſure to conduct the ſiege, made himſelf maſter of Pampeluna, and obliged John to ſeek for ſhelter in France. The Spaniſh general applied again to Dorſet, and propoſed to conduct with united councils the operations of the *holy league*, ſo it was called, againſt Lewis: But as he ſtill declined forming the ſiege of Bayonne, and rather inſiſted on the invaſion of the principality of Bearne, a part of the King of Navarre's dominions, which lies on the French ſide of the Pyrenees, Dorſet, juſtly ſuſpicious of his ſiniſter intentions, repreſented, that, without new orders from his maſter, he could not concur in ſuch an undertaking. In order to procure ſuch orders, Ferdinand diſpatched Martin de Ampios, as his envoy, to London; and perſuaded Henry, that, by the refractory and ſcrupulous humour of the Engliſh general, the moſt favourable opportunities were loſt, and that it was neceſſary he ſhould, in all things, act in concert with the Spaniſh commander, who was beſt acquainted with the ſituation of the country, and the reaſons of every operation. But before orders to this purpoſe reached Spain, Dorſet had become extremely impatient; and obſerving that his farther ſtay ſerved not to promote the main undertaking, and that his army was daily periſhing by want and ſickneſs, he de-

Deceit of Ferdinand.

CHAP. XVII.

1512.

manded ſhipping from Ferdinand to tranſport them back into England. Ferdinand, who was bound by treaty to furniſh him with this ſupply, whenever demanded, was at laſt, after many delays, obliged to yield to his importunity; and Dorſet, embarking his troops, prepared himſelf for the voyage. Meanwhile, a meſſenger arrived with orders from Henry, that the troops ſhould remain in Spain; but the ſoldiers were ſo diſcontented with the treatment which they had met with, that they mutinied, and obliged their commanders to ſet ſail for England. Henry was much diſpleaſed with the ill ſucceſs of this enterprize; and it was with difficulty, that Dorſet, by explaining the fraudulent intentions of Ferdinand, was at laſt able to appeaſe him.

Return of the Engliſh.

THERE happened this ſummer an action at ſea, which brought not any more deciſive advantage to the Engliſh. Sir Thomas Knevet, maſter of horſe, was ſent to the coaſt of Brittany with a fleet of forty-five ſail; and he carried with him Sir Charles Brandon, Sir John Carew, and many other young courtiers, who longed for an opportunity of diſplaying their valour. After committing ſome depredations, a French fleet of thirty-nine ſail iſſued from Breſt, under the command of Primauget [i], and began an engagement with the Engliſh. Primauget's ſhip was ſet on fire, who finding his deſtruction inevitable, bore down upon the veſſel of the Engliſh admiral, and grappling with her, reſolved to make her ſhare the ſame fate. The ſhips of both fleets ſtood for ſome time in ſuſpence, as ſpectators of this dreadful engagement; and all men ſaw with horror the flames which conſumed both veſſels, and heard the cries of fury and deſpair which came from the miſerable combatants. At

[i] Or rather Porſmauget, according to P. Daniel's conjecture, vol. ii. p. 1901. Hence the Engliſh ſeamen called him Sir Pierce Morgan.

laſt

laſt, the French veſſel blew up; and at the ſame time deſtroyed the Engliſh [k]. The reſt of the French fleet made their eſcape into different harbours. CHAP. XXVII. 1512.

THE war, which England waged againſt France, though it brought little advantage to the former kingdom, was of infinite prejudice to the latter; and by obliging Lewis to withdraw his forces for the defence of his own dominions, loſt him that ſuperiority, which his arms, in the beginning of the campaign, had attained in Italy. Gaſton de Foix, his nephew, a young hero, had been entruſted with the command of the French forces; and in a few months performed ſuch feats of military art and proweſs, as were ſufficient to render illuſtrious the whole life of the oldeſt captain [l]. His career finiſhed with the great battle of Ravenna, which, after the moſt obſtinate conflict, he gained over the Spaniſh and papal armies. He periſhed the very moment his victory was compleat; and with him periſhed the fortune of the French arms in Italy. The Swiſs, who had rendered themſelves extremely formidable by their bands of diſciplined infantry, invaded the Milaneſe with a numerous army, and raiſed up that inconſtant people to a revolt againſt the dominion of France. Genoa followed the example of that dutchy; and thus Lewis, in a few weeks, entirely loſt his Italian conqueſts, except ſome garriſons; and Maximilian Sforza, the ſon of Ludovic, was again re-inſtated in poſſeſſion of Milan. 1513.

JULIUS diſcovered extreme joy on the diſcomfiture of the French; and the more ſo, as he had been beholden for it to the Swiſs, a people, whoſe councils, he hoped,

[k] Polydore Virgil, lib. 27. Stowe, p. 490. Lanquet's epitome of chronicles, fol. 273.

[l] Guicciard. lib. 10.

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1513. 21st of February. Leo the tenth.

he ſhould always be able to govern and direct. The pontiff ſurvived this ſucceſs a very little time; and in his place was choſen John de Medici, who took the appellation of Leo the tenth, and proved one of the moſt illuſtrious princes that ever ſat on that throne. Humane, beneficent, generous, affable; the patron of every art, and friend of every virtue [m]; he had a ſoul no leſs capable of forming great deſigns than his predeceſſor, but was more gentle, pliant, and artful in employing means for the execution of them. By his negotiations, the emperor Maximilian was detached from the French intereſt; and Henry, notwithſtanding his diſappointments in the former campaign, was ſtill encouraged to proſecute his warlike meaſures againſt Lewis.

A parliament.

HENRY had ſummoned a new ſeſſion of parliament [n], and obtained a ſupply for his enterprize. It was a poll-tax, and impoſed different ſums, according to the ſtation and riches of the perſon. A duke payed ten marks, an earl five pounds, a lord four pounds, a knight four marks; every man valued at eight hundred pounds in goods, four marks. An impoſition was alſo granted of two fifteenths and four tenths [o]. With theſe ſupplies, joined to the treaſure which had been left by his father, and which was not yet entirely diſſipated, he was enabled to levy a great army, and render himſelf very formidable to his enemy. The Engliſh are ſaid to have been much encouraged in this enterprize, by the arrival of a veſſel in the Thames under the papal banner. It carried preſents of wine and hams to the King, and all the moſt eminent courtiers; and ſuch fond devotion was at that time entertained towards the court of Rome, that theſe trivial preſents were every where received with the greateſt triumph and exultation.

[m] Father Paul, lib. 1. [n] 4th of November, 1512. [o] Stowe.

IN

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In order to prevent all disturbance from Scotland, while Henry's arms should be employed on the continent, Dr. West, dean of Windsor, was dispatched in an embassy to James, the King's brother-in-law; and instructions were given him to accommodate all differences between the kingdoms, as well as to discover the intentions of the court of Scotland [p]. Some complaints had already passed on both sides. One Barton, a Scotsman, having suffered injuries from the Portugueze, for which he could obtain no redress, had procured letters of marque against that nation; but he had no sooner got to sea, than he abused this liberty, committed depredations upon the English, and much infested the narrow seas [q]. Lord Howard and Sir Edward Howard, admirals, and sons to the earl of Surrey, sailing out against him, fought him in a desperate rencounter, where the pyrate was killed; and they brought his ships into the Thames. As Henry refused all satisfaction for this act of justice, some of the borderers, who wanted but a pretence for depredations, entered England under the command of lord Hume, warden of the marches, and committed great ravages on that kingdom. Notwithstanding these mutual grounds of dissatisfaction, matters might easily have been accommodated, had it not been for Henry's intended invasion of France, which rouzed up the jealousy of the Scottish nation [r]. The antient league, which subsisted between France and Scotland, was conceived to be the strongest band of connexion; and the Scots universally believed, that, were it not for the countenance which they received from this foreign alliance, they had never been able so long to maintain their independance against

War with Scotland.

[p] Polydore Virgil, lib. 27.

[q] Stowe, p. 489. Hollingshed, p. 811.

[r] Buchannan, lib. 13. Drummond in the life of James IV.

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a people ſo much ſuperior in force and riches. James was farther incited to take part in the quarrel by the invitations of Anne, Queen of France, whoſe knight he had ever in all tournaments profeſt himſelf, and who ſummoned him, according to the ideas of romantic gallantry, prevalent in that age, to take the field in her defence, and prove himſelf her true and valorous champion. The remonſtrances of his conſort and of his wiſeſt counſellors, were in vain oppoſed to the martial ardour of that prince. He firſt ſent a ſquadron of ſhips to the aſſiſtance of France; the only fleet which Scotland ſeems ever to have poſſeſſed. And though he made profeſſion ſtill to maintain a neutrality, the Engliſh ambaſſador eaſily foreſaw, that a war would prove in the end inevitable, and he gave warning of the danger to his maſter, who ſent the earl of Surry to put the borders in a poſture of defence, and to reſiſt the invaſion of the enemy.

HENRY, all on fire for military fame, was little diſcouraged by this appearance of a diverſion from the North; and ſo much the leſs, as he flattered himſelf with the aſſiſtance of all the conſiderable potentates of Europe in his invaſion of France. The pope ſtill continued to thunder out his excommunications againſt Lewis, and all the adherents to the ſchiſmatical council: The Swiſs cantons made profeſſions of the moſt violent animoſity againſt France: The ambaſſadors of Ferdinand and Maximilian had ſigned with thoſe of Henry a treaty of alliance againſt that power, and had ſtipulated the time and place of their intended invaſion: And though Ferdinand diſavowed his ambaſſador, and even ſigned a truce for a twelvemonth with the common enemy; Henry was not yet fully convinced of his ſelfiſh and ſiniſter intentions, and ſtill hoped for his concurrence after the expiration

expiration of that term. He had now got a miniſter who complied with all his inclinations, and flattered him in every ſcheme to which his ſanguine and impetuous temper was inclined. CHAP. XXVII. 1513.

THOMAS WOLSEY, dean of Lincoln, and almoner to the King, ſurpaſſed in favour all his miniſters and courtiers, and was faſt advancing towards that unrivalled grandeur, which he afterwards attained. This man was the ſon of a butcher at Ipſwich; but having got a learned education, and being endowed with an excellent capacity, he was admitted into the marquis of Dorſet's family as tutor to that nobleman's children, and ſoon gained the friendſhip and countenance of his patron [a]. He was recommended as chaplain to Henry the Seventh, and being employed by that monarch in a ſecret negotiation, which regarded his intended marriage with Margaret of Savoy, Maximilian's daughter, he acquitted himſelf to the King's ſatisfaction, and obtained the praiſe both of diligence and dexterity in his conduct [b]. That prince having given him a commiſſion to Maximilian, who at that time reſided in Bruſſels, was ſurprized, in leſs than three days after, to ſee Wolſey preſent himſelf before him; and ſuppoſing that he had protracted his departure, he began to reprove him for the dilatory execution of his orders. Wolſey informed him, that he was juſt returned from Bruſſels, and had ſucceſsfully fulfilled all his majeſty's commands. "But on ſecond thoughts," ſaid the King, "I found that ſomewhat was omitted in "your orders; and have ſent a meſſenger after you "with fuller inſtructions." "I met the meſſenger," replied Wolſey, "on my return: But as I had reflect-"ed on that omiſſion, I ventured of myſelf to exe- Wolſey miniſter.

[a] Stowe, p. 997.

[b] Cavendiſh, Fiddes's life of Wolſey. Stowe.

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"cute what, I knew, muſt be your majeſty's inten-
"tions." The death of Henry, ſoon after this incident, was the reaſon why Wolſey reaped no advantage from the good opinion, which that monarch had entertained of him: But from that moment he was looked on at court as a riſing man; and Fox, biſhop of Wincheſter, caſt his eye upon him as one, who might be ſerviceable to him in his preſent ſituation [c]. This prelate, obſerving that the earl of Surrey had totally eclipſed him in favour, reſolved to introduce Wolſey into the young prince's familiarity, and hoped, that he might rival Surrey in his inſinuating arts, and yet be contented to act in the cabinet a part ſubordinate to Fox himſelf, who had promoted him. In a very little time, Wolſey gained ſo much on Henry's good graces, that he ſupplanted both Surrey in his favour, and Fox in his truſt and confidence. Being admitted to the King's parties of pleaſure, he took the lead in every jovial converſation, and promoted all that frolic and entertainment, which he found ſuitable to the age and inclination of the young monarch. Neither his own years, which were near forty, nor his character of a clergyman, were any reſtraint upon him, or engaged him to check, by any uſeleſs ſeverity, the gaiety, in which Henry, who had ſmall propenſion to debauchery, paſſed his careleſs hours. During the intervals of amuſement he introduced buſineſs and ſtate affairs, and inſinuated thoſe maxims of conduct, which he was deſirous his maſter ſhould adopt. He obſerved to him, that, while he entruſted his affairs into the hands of his father's counſellors, he had the advantage indeed of employing men of wiſdom and experience, but men who owed not their promotion to his favour, and who ſcarce

[c] Antiq. Brit. Eccleſ. p. 309. Polydore Virgil, lib. 27.

thought

thought themſelves accountable to him for the exerciſe of their authority: That by the factions, and cabals, and jealouſies, which prevailed among them, they more obſtructed the advancement of his affairs, than they promoted it by the knowledge which age and practice had conferred upon them: That while he thought proper to paſs his time in thoſe pleaſures, to which his age and royal fortune invited him, and in thoſe ſtudies, which would in time enable him to ſway the ſceptre with abſolute authority, his beſt ſyſtem of government would be to entruſt his authority into the hands of ſome one perſon, who was the creature of his will, and who could entertain no view but that of promoting his ſervice: And that if this miniſter had alſo the ſame reliſh for pleaſure with himſelf, and the ſame taſte for ſcience; he could the more eaſily, at intervals, account to him for his whole conduct, and introduce his maſter gradually into the knowledge of public buſineſs, and thus, without tedious conſtraint or application, initiate him in the ſcience of government [d]. CHAP. XXVII. 1513.

HENRY entered into all the views of Wolſey; and finding no one ſo capable of executing this plan of adminiſtration as the perſon who propoſed it, he ſoon advanced his favourite, from being the companion of his careleſs hours, to be a member of his council; and from being a member of his council, to be his ſole and abſolute miniſter. By this rapid advancement and uncontrouled authority, the character and genius of Wolſey had full opportunity to diſplay itſelf. Inſatiable in his acquiſitions, but ſtill more magnificent in his expence: Of extenſive capacity, but ſtill more unbounded enterprize: Ambitious of power, but ſtill more deſirous of His character.

[d] Cavendiſh, p. 22. Stowe, p. 499.

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glory: Inſinuating, engaging, perſuaſive; and, by turns, lofty, elevated, commanding: Haughty to his equals, but affable to his dependants; oppreſſive to the people, but liberal to his friends; more generous than grateful; leſs moved by injuries than by contempt; he ſeemed framed to take the aſcendant in every intercourſe with others, but exerted this ſuperiority of *nature* with ſuch oſtentation as expoſed him to envy, and made every one willing to recal the original inferiority or rather meanneſs of his *fortune*.

THE branch of adminiſtration, in which Henry moſt exerted himſelf, while he gave his entire confidence to Wolſey, was the military, which, as it ſuited the natural gallantry and bravery of his temper, as well as the ardour of his youth, was the principal object of his attention. Finding, that Lewis had made great preparations both by ſea and land to reſiſt him, he was no leſs attentive to raiſe a formidable army and equip a conſiderable fleet for the invaſion of France. The command of the fleet was entruſted to Sir Edward Howard; who, after ſcouring the channel ſome time, preſented himſelf before Breſt, where the French navy then lay; and he challenged them to a combat. The French admiral, who expected from the Mediterranean a reinforcement of ſome gallies under the command of Prejeant de Bidoux, kept within the harbour, and ſaw with patience the Engliſh burn and deſtroy the country in the neighbourhood. At laſt Prejeant arrived with ſix gallies, and put into Conquet, a place within a few leagues of Breſt, where he ſecured himſelf behind ſome batteries, which he had planted on rocks, that lay on each ſide of him.

25th April. Howard was notwithſtanding determined to make an attack; and as he had but two gallies, he took himſelf the command of one, and gave the other to Devereux lord Ferrars. He was followed by ſome row-barges and

and ſome crayers under the command of Sir Thomas Cheyney, Sir William Sidney, and other officers of diſtinction. He immediately faſtened on Prejeant's ſhip, and leaped on board of her, attended with one Carroz, a Spaniſh cavalier, and ſeventeen Engliſhmen. The cable, meanwhile, which faſtened his ſhip to that of the enemy, being cut, the admiral was thus left in the hands of the French; and as he ſtill continued the fight with great gallantry, he was puſhed overboard by their pikes [f]. Lord Ferrars, ſeeing the admiral's galley fall off, followed with the other veſſels; and the whole fleet was ſo diſcouraged by the loſs of their admiral, that they retired from before Breſt [g]. The French navy came out of harbour; and even ventured to invade the coaſt of Suſſex. They were repulſed, and Prejeant, their admiral, loſt an eye by the ſhot of an arrow. Lord Howard, brother to the deceaſed admiral, received the command of the Engliſh fleet; and little memorable paſſed at ſea during this ſummer. CHAP. XXVII. 1513.

GREAT preparations had been making at land, during the whole winter, for an invaſion of France by the way of Calais; but the ſummer was well advanced before every thing was in ſufficient readineſs for the intended enterprize. The long peace, which the kingdom had enjoyed, had ſomewhat unfitted the Engliſh for military expeditions; and the great change, which had lately been introduced in the art of war, had ren-

[f] It was a maxim of Howard's, that no admiral was good for any thing, that was not brave even to a degree of madneſs. As the ſea-ſervice requires much leſs plan and contrivance and capacity than the land, this maxim has great plauſibility and appearance of truth: Tho' the fate of Howard himſelf may ſerve as a proof that even there courage ought to be tempered with diſcretion.

[g] Stowe, p. 491. Herbert, Hollingſhed, p. 816.

dered

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1513. dered it ſtill more difficult to enure them to the uſe of the weapons now employed in action. The Swiſs, and after them the Spaniards, had ſhown the advantage of a ſtable infantry, who fought with pike and ſword, and were able to repulſe even the heavy-armed cavalry, in which the great force of the armies formerly conſiſted. The practice of fire-arms was become very common; tho' the caliver, which was the weapon now uſed, was ſo inconvenient, and attended with ſo many diſadvantages, that it had not entirely diſcredited the uſe of bows, a weapon in which the Engliſh excelled all European nations. The Engliſh archers ſtill maintained their reputation; and even during the preſent reign, the king's allies had ſolicited him for ſupplies of this kind. The ſecond year after his acceſſion, he ſent a thouſand archers, under the command of lord Dacres, to the aſſiſtance of Ferdinand, his father-in-law, in his projected expedition againſt the Moors of Barbary; but as that prince turned his arms againſt the French in Italy, Darcy was ſent back without being employed in any ſervice. The King had alſo ſent fifteen hundred archers under the command of Sir Edward Poinings to the aſſiſtance of Margaret, dutcheſs of Savoy, who made uſe of them with great advantage againſt the duke of Guelders, the great diſturber of the Netherlands. A conſiderable part of the forces, which Henry now levied for the invaſion of France, conſiſted alſo of archers; and ſo ſoon as affairs were in readineſs, the vanguard of the army, amounting to 8000 men, under the command of the earl of Shrewſbury, ſailed over to Calais. Shrewſbury was accompanied with the earl of Derby, the lords Fitzwater, Haſtings, Cobham, and Sir Rice ap Thomas, captain of the light horſe. Another body of 6000 men ſoon after followed under the command of

of lord Herbert, the chamberlain, attended with the earls of Northumberland and Kent, the lords Audley and Delawar, together with Carew, Curſon, and other gentlemen. CHAP. XXVII. 1513.

THE King himſelf prepared to follow with the main body and rear of the army; and he appointed the queen regent of the kingdom during his abſence. That he might ſecure her adminiſtration from all diſturbance, he ordered Edmond de la Pole, earl of Suffolk, to be beheaded in the Tower, the nobleman who had been attainted and impriſoned during the late reign. The King was led to commit this act of violence by the dying commands, as is imagined, of his father, who told him, that he never would be free from danger, while a man of ſo turbulent a diſpoſition as Suffolk was alive. And as his brother, Richard de la Pole, had accepted of a command in the French ſervice, and attempted very fooliſhly to revive the York faction, and to animate them againſt Henry, he probably drew more ſuddenly the King's vengeance on the unhappy Suffolk.

AT laſt, Henry, attended with the duke of Buckingham and many others of the nobility, arrived in Calais, and entered upon his French expedition, whence he fondly expected ſo much ſucceſs and glory [h]. Of all thoſe allies, on whoſe aſſiſtance he ſo much relied, the Swiſs alone fully performed their engagements. Being put in motion by a ſum of money ſent them by Henry, and incited by their victories obtained in Italy, and by their animoſity againſt France, they were preparing to enter that kingdom with an army of twenty-five thouſand men; and no equal force could be oppoſed 30th June. Invaſion of France.

[h] Polydore Virgil, lib. 27. Belcarius, lib. 14.

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to their incurſion. Maximilian had received an advance of 120,000 crowns from Henry, and had engaged to reinforce the Swiſs with 8000 men, but failed in his engagements. That he might make atonement to the King, he himſelf appeared in the Low Countries, and joined the Engliſh army with ſome German and Flemiſh ſoldiers, who were uſeful in giving an example of diſcipline to Henry's new-levied forces. Obſerving the diſpoſition of the Engliſh monarch to be more bent on glory than on intereſt, he inliſted himſelf in his ſervice, wore the croſs of St. George, and received pay, a hundred crowns a day, as one of his ſubjects and captains. But while he exhibited this extraordinary ſpectacle, of an emperor of Germany ſerving under a King of England, he was treated with the higheſt reſpect by Henry, and really directed all the operations of the combined army.

BEFORE the arrival of Henry and Maximilian in the camp, the earl of Shrewſbury and lord Herbert had formed the ſiege of Teroüane, a town ſituate on the frontiers of Picardy; and they began to attack the place with vigour. Teligini and Crequi commanded in the town, and had a garriſon, which did not exceed a thouſand men; yet made they ſuch ſtout reſiſtance as protracted the ſiege a month; and they found themſelves at laſt more in danger from want of proviſions and ammunition than from the aſſaults of the beſiegers. Having conveyed intelligence of their ſituation to Lewis, who had advanced to Amiens with his army, that prince gave orders to throw relief into the place. Fontrailles appeared at the head of 800 horſemen, each of whom carried a ſack of gun-powder behind him, and two quarters of bacon. With this ſmall force he made a ſudden and unexpected irruption into the Engliſh camp, and ſurmounting all reſiſtance,

16th Auguſt.

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ſiſtance, advanced to the foſſee of the town, where each horſeman threw down his burthen. They immediately returned at the gallop, and were ſo fortunate as again to break thro' the Engliſh, and to receive little or no loſs, in this dangerous attempt [i].

Battle of Guinegate.

BUT the Engliſh had, ſoon after, full revenge for that inſult. Henry had received intelligence of the approach of the French horſe, who had advanced to protect this incurſion of Fontrailles; and he ordered ſome troops to paſs the Lis, in order to oppoſe them. The cavalry of France, tho' they conſiſted chiefly of gentlemen, who had behaved with great valour in many deſperate actions in Italy, were, on ſight of the enemy, ſeized with ſo unaccountable a panic, that they immediately took to flight, and were purſued by the Engliſh. The duke of Longueville, who commanded the French, Buſſi d'Amboiſe, Clermont, Imbercourt, the chevalier Bayard, and many other officers of diſtinction were taken priſoners [k]. This action, or rather rout, is ſometimes called the battle of Guinegate, from the place where it was fought; but more commonly the *Battle of Spurs*, becauſe the French, that day, made more uſe of their ſpurs than of their ſwords or military weapons.

AFTER ſo conſiderable an advantage, the King, who was at the head of a compleat army of above 50,000 men, might have made incurſions to the gates of Paris, and ſpread confuſion and deſolation every where. It gave Lewis great joy, when he heard, that the Engliſh, inſtead of puſhing their victory, and attacking the diſmayed troops of France, returned to the ſiege of an inconſiderable place like Teroüane. The governors were

[i] Hiſt. de Chev. Bayard, chap. 57. Memoires de Bellai.

[k] Memoires de Bellai, liv. 1. Polydore Virgil, lib. 27. Hollingſhed, p. 822. Herbert.

obliged

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obliged ſoon after to ſurrender the town; and Henry found his acquiſition of ſo little conſequence, tho' gained at the expence of ſome blood, and what, in his preſent circumſtances, was more important, of much valuable time, that he immediately demoliſhed the fortifications. The anxieties of the French were again renewed with regard to the motions of the Engliſh. The Swiſs at the ſame time had entered Burgundy with a very formidable army, and laid ſiege to Dijon, which was in no condition to reſiſt them. Ferdinand himſelf, tho' he had made a truce with Lewis, ſeemed diſpoſed to lay hold of every advantage which fortune ſhould preſent to him. Scarce ever was the French monarchy in greater danger, or leſs in a condition to defend itſelf againſt thoſe powerful armies, which on every ſide aſſailed or threatened it. Even many of the inhabitants of Paris, who believed themſelves expoſed to the rapacity and violence of the enemy, began to diſlodge, without knowing what place could afford them greater ſafety and protection.

BUT Lewis was extricated from his preſent difficulties by the manifeſt blunders of his enemies. The Swiſs allowed themſelves to be ſeduced into a negotiation by Tremoüille, governor of Burgundy; and without making enquiry, whether that nobleman had any powers to treat, they accepted of the conditions which he offered them. Tremoüille, who knew, that he ſhould be diſavowed by his maſter, ſtipulated whatever they were pleaſed to demand; and thought himſelf happy, at the expence of ſome payments, and very large promiſes, to get rid of ſo formidable an enemy [1].

THE meaſures of Henry ſhowed equal ignorance in the art of war with that of the Swiſs in negotiation.

[1] Memoires du mareſchal de Fleuranges, Beliarius, lib. 14.

Tournay

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Tournay was a great and rich city, which, tho' it lay within the frontiers of Flanders, belonged entirely to France, and afforded the troops of that kingdom a paſſage into the middle of the Netherlands. Maximilian, who was deſirous to free his grandſon from ſo troubleſome a neighbourhood, adviſed Henry to lay ſiege to this place; and the Engliſh monarch, not conſidering that ſuch an acquiſition nowiſe advanced his conqueſts in France, was ſo imprudent as to follow this intereſted council. The city of Tournay, by its antient charters, being exempted from the burthen of a garriſon, the burghers, even againſt the remonſtrance of their ſovereign, ſtrenuouſly inſiſted on maintaining this dangerous privilege; and they engaged, by themſelves, to make a vigorous defence againſt the enemy [a]. Their courage failed them when matters came to extremity; and after a few days ſiege, the place was ſurrendered to the Engliſh. Henry ſo little regarded its privileges, that he immediately quartered a garriſon in it, under the command of Sir Edward Poinings. The biſhop of Tournay was lately dead; and as a new biſhop was already elected by the chapter, but not inſtalled in his office, the King beſtowed the adminiſtration of the ſee on his favourite, Wolſey, and put him in immediate poſſeſſion of the revenues, which were conſiderable [b]. Hearing of the retreat of the Swiſs, and obſerving the ſeaſon to be far advanced, he thought proper to retire into England; and he carried the greateſt part of his army with him. Succeſs had attended him in every enterprize; and his youthful mind was much elated with this ſeeming proſperity; but all men of judgment, comparing the advantages of his ſituation with his progreſs, his expences

1513. 24th September.

[a] Memoires de Fleuranges.

[b] Strype's Memorials, vol. i. p. 5, 6.

with

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with his acquiſitions, were convinced, that this campaign, ſo much vaunted, was, in reality, both ruinous and inglorious to him [c].

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An engagement was now become inevitable between the armies, and both ſides prepared for it with great tranquillity and order [a]. The Engliſh divided their army into two lines: Lord Howard led the main body of the firſt line, Sir Edmond Howard the right wing, Sir Marmaduke Conſtable the left. The earl of Surrey himſelf commanded the main body of the ſecond line, lord Dacres the right wing, Sir Edward Stanley the left. The Scots front preſented three diviſions to the enemy: The middle was led by the King himſelf; The right by the earl of Huntley, aſſiſted by lord Hume: The left by the earls of Lenox and Argyle. A fourth diviſion under the earl of Bothwel made a body of reſerve. Huntley began the battle; and after a ſharp conflict, put to flight the left wing of the Engliſh, and chaced them off the field: But on returning from the purſuit, he found the whole Scots army in great diſorder. The diviſion under Lenox and Argyle, elated with the ſucceſs of the other wing, had broke their ranks, and notwithſtanding the remonſtrances and entreaties of La Motte,

9th September. Battle of Flouden.

[a] Buchannan, lib. 13. Drummond. Herbert. Polydore Virgil, lib. 27. Stowe, p. 493. Paullus Jovius.

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the French ambaſſador, had ruſhed headlong upon the enemy. Not only Sir Edmond Howard, at the head of his diviſion, received them with great valour; but Dacres, who commanded in the ſecond line, wheeling about during the action, fell upon their rear, and put them to the ſword without reſiſtance. The diviſion under the King himſelf and that under Bothwel, animated by the valour of their leaders, ſtill made head againſt the Engliſh, and throwing themſelves into a circle, protracted the action till night ſeparated the combatants. The victory ſeemed yet uncertain, and the numbers which fell on each ſide were nearly equal, amounting to above 5000 men: But the morning diſcovered evidently where the advantage lay. The Engliſh had loſt only perſons of ſmall note; but the flower of the Scots nobility had fallen in battle, and the King himſelf, after the moſt diligent enquiry, could no where be found. In ſearching the field, the Engliſh met with a dead body, which reſembled him, and was arrayed in a ſimilar habit; and they put it in a leaden coffin, and ſent it to London. During ſome time it was kept unburied; becauſe James died under ſentence of excommunication, on account of his confederacy with France, and his oppoſition to the holy ſee[e]: But upon Henry's application, who pretended that that prince, in the inſtant before his death, had diſcovered ſigns of repentance, abſolution was given him, and his body was interred. The Scots, however, ſtill aſſerted, that it was not James's body, which was found in the field of battle, but that of one Elphinſton, who had been arrayed in arms reſembling the King's, in order to divide the attention of the Engliſh, and ſhare the danger with his maſter. It was believed that James had been ſeen croſſing the Tweed at Kelſo; and ſome

[e] Buchannan, lib. 13. Herbert.

imagined

imagined that he had been killed by the vaſſals of lord Hume, whom that nobleman had inſtigated to commit ſo enormous a crime. But the populace entertained the opinion that he was ſtill alive, and having gone ſecretly in pilgrimage to the holy land, would ſoon return, and take poſſeſſion of the throne. This fond conceit was long entertained in Scotland. CHAP. XXVII. 1513.

THE King of Scots and moſt of the chief nobility being killed in the field of Flouden, ſo this battle was called, a very inviting opportunity was offered to Henry of gaining advantages over that kingdom, perhaps of reducing it to ſubjection. But he diſcovered on this occaſion a mind truly great and generous. When the Queen of Scotland, Margaret, who was created regent during the infancy of her ſon, applied for peace, he readily granted it; and took compaſſion of the helpleſs condition of his ſiſter and nephew. The earl of Surrey, who had gained him ſo great a victory, he reſtored to the title of duke of Norfolk, which had been forfeited by his father, for engaging on the ſide of Richard the third. His ſon, lord Howard, was honoured with the title of earl of Surrey. Sir Charles Brandon, his favourite, whom he had before created viſcount Liſle, was now raiſed to the dignity of duke of Suffolk. Wolſey, who was both his favourite and his miniſter, was created biſhop of Lincoln. Lord Herbert obtained the title of earl of Worceſter. Sir Edward Stanley, that of lord Monteagle. 1514.

THO' peace with Scotland gave Henry ſecurity towards the North, and enabled him to proſecute in tranquillity his enterprize againſt France, ſome other incidents had happened, which more than counterbalanced this fortunate event, and ſerved to open his eyes with regard to the raſhneſs of an undertaking, into which his youth and high fortune had betrayed him.

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1514. LEWIS, fully ſenſible of the dangerous ſituation to which his kingdom had been reduced during the former campaign, was reſolved, by every expedient, to prevent the return of like perils, and to break the confederacy of his enemies. The Pope was now diſpoſed to puſh the French to extremity; and provided they did not return to take poſſeſſion of Milan, his intereſt rather led him to preſerve the balance among the contending parties. He accepted, therefore, of Lewis's offer to renounce the council of Lyons; and he took off the excommunication which his predeceſſor and himſelf had denounced againſt that King and his kingdom. Ferdinand was now faſt declining in years, and as he entertained no farther ambition than that of keeping poſſeſſion of Navarre, which he had ſubdued by his arms and policy, he readily hearkened to the propoſals of Lewis for prolonging the truce another year; and he even ſhowed an inclination of forming a more intimate connexion with that monarch. Lewis had dropt hints of his intention to marry his ſecond daughter, Renée, either to Charles, prince of Spain, or his brother, Ferdinand, both of them grandchildren to the Spaniſh monarch; and he declared his reſolution of beſtowing on her, as her portion, his claim to the dutchy of Milan. Ferdinand not only embraced theſe ſchemes with avidity; but alſo engaged the emperor, Maximilian, in the ſame views, and procured his conſent to a treaty, which opened ſo inviting a proſpect of aggrandizing their common grandchildren.

WHEN Henry was informed of Ferdinand's renewal of the truce with Lewis, he fell into the moſt violent rage, and loudly complained, that his father-in-law had firſt, by the higheſt promiſes and profeſſions, engaged him in enmity with France, and afterwards, without giving him the leaſt warning, had now again ſacrificed

his intereſt to his own ſelfiſh purpoſes, and had left him CHAP. XXVII.
expoſed alone to all the dangers and expences of the war. In proportion to his eaſy credulity and unſuſpecting reliance on Ferdinand was the vehemence with which he exclaimed againſt the treatment, which he met with; and he threatened revenge for this egregious treachery and breach of faith [f]. But he loſt all patience when informed of the other negotiations, by which Maximilian was alſo ſeduced from his alliance, and where propoſals had been hearkened to, for the marriage of the prince of Spain with the daughter of France. Charles, during the lifetime of the late King, had been affianced to Mary, Henry's ſecond ſiſter; and as the prince now approached the age of puberty, the King had expected the immediate completion of the marriage, and the honourable ſettlement of a ſiſter, for whom he had entertained a very tender affection. Such a complication, therefore, of injuries gave him the higheſt diſpleaſure, and inſpired him with a deſire of expreſſing his diſdain towards thoſe who had taken advantage of his youth and inexperience, and had abuſed his too great facility. 1514.

The duke of Longueville, who had been made priſoner at the battle of Guinegate, and who was ſtill detained in England, was ready to take advantage of all theſe diſpoſitions of Henry, in order to procure a peace and even an alliance, which he knew to be ſo paſſionately deſired by his maſter. He repreſented to the King, that Anne, Queen of France, being lately dead, a door was thereby opened for an affinity, which might tend to the advantage of both kingdoms, and which would ſerve to terminate honourably all the differences between them. That ſhe had left Lewis no male children; and as he

[f] Petrus de Angleria, Epiſt. 545, 546.

had

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1514. had ever entertained a ſtrong deſire of having heirs to the crown, no marriage ſeemed more ſuitable to him than that with the princeſs of England, whoſe youth and beauty afforded the moſt flattering hopes in that particular: That tho' the marriage of a princeſs of ſixteen, with a King of fifty-three, might ſeem unſuitable; yet the other advantages, attending the alliance, were more than a ſufficient compenſation for this inequality: And that Henry, in looſening his connections with Spain, whence he had never experienced any advantage, would contract a cloſe affinity with Lewis, a prince, who thro' his whole life, had invariably maintained the character of probity and honour.

As Henry ſeemed to hearken to this diſcourſe with very willing ears, Longueville informed his maſter of the probability, which he diſcovered, of bringing this matter to a happy concluſion; and he received full powers for negotiating the treaty. The articles were eaſily adjuſted between the monarchs. Lewis agreed that Tournay ſhould remain in the hands of the Engliſh; that Richard de la Pole ſhould be baniſhed to Metz, there to live on a penſion aſſigned him by Lewis; that Henry ſhould receive payment of a million of crowns, being the arrears due by treaty to his father and himſelf; and that the princeſs Mary ſhould bring four hundred thouſand crowns as her portion, and enjoy as large a jointure as any queen of France, even the former, who was heireſs of Britanny. The two princes alſo ſtipulated the ſuccours, with which they ſhould mutually ſupply each other, in caſe either of them was attacked by any enemy [a].

Peace with France. 7th of Auguſt.

In conſequence of this treaty, Mary was ſent over to France with a ſplendid retinue, and Lewis met her at Abbeville, where the eſpouſals were celebrated. He

9th of October.

[a] Du Tillet.

was

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was enchanted with the beauty, grace, and numerous accompliſhments of the young princeſs; and being naturally of an amorous diſpoſition, which his advanced age had not entirely cooled, he was ſeduced into ſuch a courſe of gaiety and pleaſure, as proved very unſuitable to his declining ſtate of health [b]. He died in leſs than three months after his marriage, to the infinite regret of his ſubjects, who, ſenſible of his tender concern for their welfare, gave him with one voice the honourable appellation of *father of his people*.

1514.

1515. 1ſt of January.

FRANCIS, duke of Angouleme, a youth of one and twenty, who had married Lewis's eldeſt daughter, ſucceeded him on the throne; and by his activity, valour, generoſity, and other virtues, gave prognoſtics of a happy and glorious reign. This young monarch had been extremely ſtruck with the charms of the Engliſh princeſs; and even during his predeceſſor's life-time, had payed her ſuch cloſe attendance as made ſome of his friends apprehend that he had entertained views of gallantry towards her. But being warned, that, by indulging himſelf in this paſſion, he might readily exclude his own title to the throne, he forbore all farther addreſſes; and even watched the young dowager with a very careful eye during the firſt months of her widowhood. Charles Brandon, duke of Suffolk, was at that time in the court of France, the moſt comely perſonage of his time, and the moſt accompliſhed in all the exerciſes, which were then thought to befit a courtier and a ſoldier. He was Henry's chief favourite; and that monarch had even once entertained thoughts of marrying him to his ſiſter, and had given indulgence to that mutual paſſion, which took place between them. The

[b] Brantome Eloge de Louis XII.

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queen aſked Suffolk, whether he had now the courage, without farther reflection, to eſpouſe her; and ſhe told him, that her brother would more eaſily forgive him for not aſking his conſent, than for acting contrary to his orders. Suffolk declined not ſo inviting an offer; and the marriage was ſecretly compleated at Paris. Francis, who was pleaſed with this marriage, as it prevented Henry from forming any powerful alliance by means of his ſiſter [e], interpoſed his good offices in appeaſing him: And even Wolſey, having entertained no jealouſy of Suffolk, who was content to participate in the King's pleaſures, and had no ambition to interpoſe in ſtate affairs, was active in reconciling the King to his ſiſter and brother-in-law; and he obtained them permiſſion to return to England.

[e] Petrus de Angleria, Epiſt. 544.

End of the THIRD VOLUME.

20 JY 63

P. 330 - First Appearance of the sweating Sickness.

P. 423 - There was another more reasonable Law, by which Merchants trading with Venice were bound to admit a certain Number of good Bow Staves in Proportion to the Value of imported Commodities - See Rawdon Brown's Introduction to the Correspondence of Sebastian Giustiniani. 1855.

Very high Prices of Cloth at this Time 1509. and high Rate of Wages also.

P. 424 - Great Advance on prime Cost made by Retailers.